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Dubai
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MARKS NEW ERA OF AFRICAN AVIATION



The African Airlines Association (AFRAA) heralds a transformative milestone in African aviation with the full operational deployment of Free Route Airspace (FRA) in the Western and Central Africa (WACAF) region, effective 30 October 2025.

This landmark achievement, transitioning from successful trials initiated in November 2023, will allow any airline to plan and fly more direct User Preferred Routes (UPRs), significantly enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of air travel across the continent.

UPRs allow airlines to fly the most fuel-efficient and timely paths based on current conditions, rather than having to follow fixed, conventional routes, giving the pilots more flexibility and enabling them to adjust to factors like weather and winds, leading to reduced fuel consumption, shorter flight times and lower carbon emissions.

African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) has supported the FRA initiative since the trials began in 2023, in accordance with its Memorandum of Understanding with AFRAA and in line with the Global Air Navigation Plan of the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the conclusions of the Africa-India (AFI) FRA Planning and Implementation Regional Group.

The deployment of the FRA represents a decisive step resulting from a collaborative effort between air operators and air navigation service providers (ANSPs) who reached a consensus at a joint workshop in Dakar, Senegal to conclude the trial phase

and move to full implementation.

Substantial Benefits for Launch Airlines

In a powerful demonstration of the initiative's potential, six leading African airlines including Ethiopian Airlines, Kenya Airways, EGYPTAIR, Royal Air Maroc, RwandAir and ASKY Airlines were granted approval for UPRs, connecting 30 key city pairs. The shift to UPRs is expected to generate significant annual returns to participating airlines including over 1,393 hours of cumulative flight time saved, cutting 5,000 metric tonnes of fuel burn and therefore avoiding some 16,000 metric tonnes of CO2 emissions, and a reduction in annual fuel costs of about US\$ 15 million.

A Free Route Airspace for all

Crucially, the WACAF airspace is now open for free routes. Starting 30 October 2025, any airline can plan and operate User Preferred Routes. The region's ANSPs have committed to approving newly requested UPR within 48 hours. Furthermore, following final administrative work by the 24 WACAF States, this process will be further streamlined, with approvals no longer required for new UPR requests from mid-2026.

A Continent-wide Vision for the Future

The success in WACAF paves the way for the next phase of continental integration. The focus for 2026 will shift to the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAF) airspace to conclude trials and achieve a similar FRA implementation. The region is also committed to developing a web-based coordination platform to streamline operations for airlines and ANSPs.

IN THE NEWS

Uganda Wraps Up 48th EAC-FAL Talks



Uganda has successfully concluded the 48th East African Consultative Meeting on Facilitation of Air Transport (EAC-FAL) which was held at Speke Resort Munyonyo from 26th–28th November 2025 organized by Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, through the Ministry of Works and Transport.

The meeting which was officially opened by the Minister of Works and Transport, Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala highlighted Uganda’s strong commitment to regional aviation cooperation, improved passenger facilitation, and enhanced air transport efficiency.

The meeting consisted of delegates from across the East African Community, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA),

the African Union Commission, and several partner agencies. The meeting highlighted Uganda’s growing role in air transport in the region, with Entebbe International Airport handling over 243,000 international passengers in August 2025 alone, and Uganda Airlines expanding its route network to 17 destinations.

Speaking on behalf of the UCAA Director General, Ms. Olive B. Lumonya, the Deputy Director General, emphasized the importance of harmonizing facilitation standards across the region to ensure the seamless movement of passengers, cargo and aircraft in line with ICAO’s Annex 9 on Facilitation.

She commended the inspection of Entebbe International Airport carried out by delegates earlier in the week, noting that the feedback they share through such engagements is vital for continuous improvement.

- Delegates deliberated on key issues, including:
- Reviewing progress on ICAO standards implementation
- Strengthening regional cooperation on air transport facilitation
- Enhancing efficiencies in aircraft, passenger, and cargo processing
- Supporting tourism, trade, and connectivity across East Africa

As Uganda continues to invest in modern infrastructure, including the expansion of the passenger terminal building at Entebbe International Airport, rehabilitation of key runways, and the development of Hoima International Airport, meetings like the EAC-FAL reaffirm Uganda’s dedication to safe, efficient, and globally competitive aviation services and standards.

Kenya Airways and Qatar Airways Seal Strategic Codeshare Deal to Boost Global Connectivity

Kenya Airways and Qatar Airways have finalized a major strategic codeshare agreement, set to launch on October 26, 2025, significantly enhancing connectivity between Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Under the deal, passengers will gain seamless access to a combined network of 19 destinations across three continents. Kenya Airways customers will enjoy one-stop connectivity via Doha to 11 new global destinations in Asia, Australia, and the Middle East.

Conversely, Qatar Airways passengers will receive streamlined access to 8 key African cities through the Nairobi hub, offering deeper entry into East and Central Africa’s safari and economic centers.

To support the expanded partnership, Qatar Airways will add a third daily flight on the Doha-Nairobi route, providing greater schedule flexibility and capacity.

Kenya Airways hailed the alliance as a cornerstone of its global network strategy, while Qatar Airways emphasized its commitment to connecting continents and strengthening its African presence.

The partnership is anticipated to reshape travel corridors and is eagerly awaited by the aviation





Conducts Public Hearing for Prospective Air Service Operators

In a significant move to bolster the nation's aviation sector, the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority (UCAA) convened a public hearing to evaluate applications from three new air service operators. The 52nd Board Air Services Licensing committee meeting was held at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel in Kampala on Friday, November 7, 2025.

The hearing provided a platform for the committee to scrutinize the proposals of Flight Training Center, Aerojet Aviation Ltd, and Kampala Executive Aviation, each outlining ambitious plans to expand their operations within Uganda's airspace.

A Diversified Push for Aviation Growth

The applications revealed a strategic push into various niches of the aviation market:

- Kampala Executive Aviation, currently a charter flight operator, defended its application to expand into aerial work as well as domestic and international scheduled passenger

services. This marks a potential significant scaling up of its business model.

- Flight Training Centre applied for a license to undertake domestic and international non-scheduled passenger and cargo flights.
- Aerojet Aviation Ltd is seeking to commence operations focused on domestic and international non-scheduled passenger and cargo transport.

During the session, members of the public were given an opportunity to voice their opinions and comments on the presentations made by the aspiring operators.

Chairman Calls for Collaboration to Boost Connectivity

In his opening remarks, the UCAA Board Chairman, Hon. Steven Kavuma, underscored the importance of strategic partnerships among licensed operators.

This public hearing signifies a proactive step by the UCAA to foster competition, diversify service offerings, and ultimately strengthen Uganda's position as a growing hub for aviation in the East African region.



Qatar Airways Group today announced the appointment of Mr. Hamad Ali Al Khater as Group Chief Executive Officer, effective Sunday, 7 December 2025. Mr. Al Khater succeeds Engr. Badr Mohammed Al Meer.

Mr. Al-Khater joins Qatar Airways Group from Hamad International Airport, where he has served as Chief Operating Officer. In that role, he was responsible for ensuring the safety and reliability of airport operations, while leading its strategic direction, operational excellence, infrastructure expansion, and the continuous enhancement of passenger experience.

Prior to his tenure at Hamad International Airport, Mr. Al-Khater held senior roles across QatarEnergy, driving business development, deal execution, and leading large-scale strategic and operational initiatives.

Qatar Airways Group Board of Directors Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, said: "Qatar Airways Group extends its appreciation to Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer for his service.

As we welcome Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Khater, we look forward to building on the strong foundations and expansive global network of Qatar Airways, anchored by our exceptional team in Qatar and around the world.

With this leadership transition, Qatar Airways Group reaffirms its commitment to delivering world-class experiences, reliability, and innovation to travelers around the globe."

QATAR
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Group Appoints Mr. Hamad Ali Al-Khater as Group CEO



Istanbul Airport Topples Heathrow as Europe's Busiest Hub

In a landmark shift for European aviation, Istanbul Airport has officially surpassed London Heathrow to become the continent's busiest airport. Data from analytics firm OAG for October 2025 confirms this historic change, signaling a symbolic transfer of power from an established Western hub to a new Eastern super-connector.

The numbers reveal that Istanbul offered 4.53 million one-way seats in October, a 9% year-on-year increase, narrowly edging out Heathrow's 4.47 million seats. This milestone is the culmination of a decade-long strategy to position Istanbul as the premier gateway linking Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The airport's dramatic rise is powered almost entirely by its home carrier, Turkish Airlines. The airline's relentless network expansion—now serving over 350 global destinations—funnels a massive and growing stream of transfer passengers through its Istanbul hub. With plans to grow its fleet from 500 to 800 aircraft by 2033, Turkish Airlines' growth engine shows no sign of slowing.

The contrast in infrastructure between the two hubs is stark. Heathrow has long been constrained by its two-runway system and political barriers to expansion. In contrast, Istanbul Airport was designed for immense scale from its inception, currently operating three runways with plans to expand to five by 2028. This purpose-built, modern design provides superior capacity and operational efficiency.

Looking ahead, Istanbul's momentum appears unstoppable. Development continues toward a staggering capacity of 200 million annual passengers by the decade's end. Heathrow remains a formidable hub, but Istanbul's dethroning of the UK giant is more than symbolic; it is a definitive signal that the center of gravity in European aviation is moving decisively eastward, driven by strategic ambition and unparalleled infrastructure.





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TREMENDOUS PROGRESS RECORDED IN UGANDA'S AVIATION INDUSTRY



country's tourism potential.

In addition, traffic is also expected to be boosted by the coming on board of new operators like AirlinK, which commenced flights to South Africa in September 2021, Air Arabia, which commenced flights from Entebbe to Sharjah, UAE in October 2021 and Saudi Airlines, which commenced direct flights to Saudi Arabia in February 2022.

In terms of cargo, Entebbe handled 6,600 metric tonnes of cargo in 1991, 59,720 metric tonnes in 2020 and 64,000 metric tonnes in 2021. An average of about 5,000 metric tonnes of cargo is so far being recorded per month in 2022.

Uganda's major exports, include fresh produce, including fish, flowers, vegetables and fruits, which are consumed by markets in Netherlands, Belgium and the Middle East. The new state-of-the-art cargo Centre with capacity to handle 100,000 metric tonnes annually is aimed at addressing this demand. Cargo operations have already shifted to the new facility.

The overall project for upgrade and expansion of Entebbe International is at 79% level of completion and also includes, among others;

- Strengthening of the main runway 17/35 and associated taxiways - complete
- Strengthening and rehabilitation of the alternative Runway 12/30 and the associated taxiways – completed
- Rehabilitation of Aircraft Parking Apron 4 and Reconstruction of Aircraft Parking Apron 2 – completed
- Expansion of the main Aircraft Parking Apron 1 – ongoing

Construction of a new Terminal building is currently ongoing in the area where cargo operations were previously undertaken. Annual capacity of the current terminal facilities will then increase from 2 million passengers a year to about 3 million passengers by end of 2023.

The current terminal has also been re-modified to create more room for departing passengers. The departure area is already in use, and the departure road has been re-instated. Soon, departing passengers will be dropped off at the entrance to the terminal building.

A Terminal Operations Control Centre has also been erected by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to ensure automation of operations as part of a USD 9.5 Million grant by the Government of South Korea. KOICA is the implementing agency of the project on behalf of the Korean government. The project,

In line with the Uganda Vision 2040, Government developed a 20-year National Civil Aviation Master Plan covering the period up to 2033. The Master Plan covers Entebbe International Airport and other airfields in the country.

The project for the upgrade and expansion of Entebbe International Airport is critical to the development of the air transport industry in light of the growing passenger and cargo traffic figures. While Entebbe International Airport handled 118,000 international passengers in 1991 at Uganda Civil Aviation Authority's (UCAA) establishment, the Airport handled 1.65 Million passengers in 2017, 1.84 Million passengers in 2018 and 1.98 million passengers in 2019.

The passenger traffic growth trend was only halted in 2020 when the figure reduced to 565,541 owing to the effects occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. The revival and commencement of flights by the national airline, Uganda Airlines, is expected to further grow this traffic (in subsequent years), and promote the



which was commissioned in September 2022 has also delivered the following:

- A Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS)
- Airport Operational database (AODB) system
- Implementation of ATS Message Handling System (AMHS)
- Improvement of Flight Procedures efficiency through Air Traffic Management
- Capacity building, including training of Ugandans in Korea.

In the area of legislation, H.E. the President assented to the CAA Amendment Act, 2019 and it was published in the Uganda Gazette as CAA Act No. 7 of 2019. Most of the amendments were aimed at ensuring harmonization of Uganda's regulations and practices with the universal practice across the globe.

In an effort to expand connectivity, Uganda signed Bilateral Air Service Agreements (BASAs) with Israel, Canada and Switzerland. Uganda has so far concluded 47 BASAs of which 27 have already been operationalized. This shows commitment to open new air routes and to attract more operators to Uganda.

UCAA and Entebbe International Airport retained the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems (QMS) Certificate in 2021 following compliance with stringent requirements for the internationally recognized certification by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Other aerodromes operated and managed by UCAA in Gulu, Arua, Soroti, Mbarara, Tororo, Kisoro, Pakuba, Kasese, Jinja and Kidepo were also awarded ISO 9001:2015 QMS Certification for a period of three years up to 2024.

Other major achievements recently accomplished by the Authority include the following:-

- Implementation of the new Electronic Government Procurement System (eGP) which went live in November 2020. UCAA was one of the ten pilot entities.
- Instrumental in the process for inclusion of the Uganda Airlines Airbus A330-800 neo aircraft fleet on the airline's Air Operator Certificate.
- Approval of additional Aviation Training Organizations (ATOS), including Bar Aviation Academy, Kubis Aviation Academy and additional training programmes by Morea. The number of Approved ATOs is now 8.
- Renewal of Uganda Air Cargo's Air Operator Certificate and

re-activation of the Air Service License (ASL), which permits them to undertake commercial air cargo business.

- Provision of necessary support to the Ministry of Works and Transport in the establishment of an Accident and Incident Investigation unit.

One of UCAA's strategic objectives is to promote the development of an Air Navigation System aligned to the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP). It is in line with providing airspace users with improved capacity and efficiency. In this respect, the Air Traffic Management system has undergone various system improvements and upgrades as follows;

Air Traffic Management (ATM) has made a transition from conventional navigation using ground aids to the use of satellite based navigation. Since 2020, arrival and departure procedures in Entebbe are based on the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), which has improved the safety, efficiency and capacity of the Ugandan airspace.

Due to the ATM improvements above, UCAA has been able to implement free routing airspace within the Entebbe Flight Information Region (on request from IATA). Using this technology, a pilot can safely fly from point to point within the Ugandan airspace without following the published routes.

In relation to upgrade and improvement of Navigation Aids infrastructure and systems,

UCAA adopted a phased approach, which has involved;

- Installation of High Frequency (HF) Radio system for the Rescue Coordination Centre at Entebbe International Airport was completed. This facilitates the provision of Search and Rescue Services to aircraft in need of the services within the Flight Information Region (FIR).
- The Non Directional Beacon (NDB) at Port Bell, Luzira, has been installed and there is an on-going project to replace the Distance Measuring Equipment at Entebbe.
- Upgrade of the Automatic weather observation system is ongoing.
- Implementation of the electronic terrain and obstacle data (eTOD) for the area covering the entire territory of Uganda, in line with the requirements of ICAO. This involves collection of terrain and obstacle data for the entire country. This data is used in various air navigation applications.



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BEYOND THE RUNWAY:

Assessing AFCAC's Ambitious Flight Path for African Aviation

Gatwiri Edna



The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) has long been the architect of grand designs for the continent's skies. Under the banner of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), it has championed a transformative vision: seamless connectivity, reduced fares, boosted economies, and a powerful, competitive African airline sector.

But as the horizon of 2024 comes into view, a critical question emerges from the tarmac: is the organization transitioning from visionary blueprints to tangible, continent-wide altitude?

The Ambitious Ascent: AFCAC's Stated Goals

AFCAC's ambitions are anything but modest. Anchored by SAATM—its flagship project—the commission aims to:

- **Liberalize African Skies:** Dismantle restrictive bilateral agreements and allow African airlines to fly freely between member states, fostering competition and network optimization.
- **Drive Economic Integration:** Use aviation as a catalyst for trade, tourism, and investment under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- **Enhance Safety & Security:** Continuously harmonize and elevate safety standards across all 54 nations, a non-negotiable foundation for growth.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Guide the continent's aviation sector towards greener technologies and sustainable practices.

Progress Check: Climbing Through Turbulence

Undeniably, AFCAC has recorded significant successes. The symbolic launch of SAATM in 2018 was a historic milestone. The number of committed member states has grown, and several key corridors have seen increased connectivity. AFCAC's work in safety oversight, through the Cooperative



Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Program (COSCAPs), has contributed to Africa's improved safety record—a prerequisite for global confidence.

However, the journey has encountered predictable and severe headwinds:

- **The Implementation Gap:** While 36 countries have signed on to SAATM, operationalization is patchy. Many nations remain protective of their national carriers and bilateral revenues, slowing meaningful liberalization.
- **Fragmented Infrastructure:** The vision of seamless travel is hampered by uneven airport facilities, visa restrictions, and costly aviation charges in some states.
- **Financial Headwinds:** The continent's airlines face a harsh economic climate—high fuel costs, fierce foreign competition, and heavy taxation—limiting their ability to capitalize on new freedoms.
- **Geopolitical Realities:** Political instability in some regions and bureaucratic inertia in others create "no-fly zones" for progress.

Stakeholder Voices: A Mixed Cockpit

- **Advocates & Optimists** point to the growing list of SAATM-compliant routes and the potential unlocked by the Yamoussoukro Decision's gradual enactment. They see AFCAC as a vital convener and standard-setter, navigating a complex political landscape.
- **Critics & Realists** argue progress is too slow. They highlight that the vast majority of intra-African travel is still governed by old, restrictive agreements. They call for more assertive measures, tangible incentives, and concrete penalties to move from commitment to action.
- **Airlines & Industry** are cautiously pragmatic. They welcome the vision but seek a more level playing field, reduced operational costs, and clearer, faster implementation to make new route investments viable.



Clearing the Path to Altitude:

The Crucial Next Decade

For AFCAC to truly deliver, the next phase must focus on actionable acceleration:

1. **Targeted "Champion" Corridors:** Move beyond broad advocacy to fully operationalizing key strategic routes, creating visible success stories.
2. **Holistic Ecosystem Reform:** Partner with states to address not just air rights, but also visas, airport efficiency, and cost reduction in tandem.
3. **Empowering the Private Sector:** Facilitate financing and public-private partnerships to enable airlines and service providers to invest in the new landscape.
4. **Transparent Scorecard:** Publish regular, detailed metrics on SAATM's impact—new routes, frequency, fare changes—to build momentum and accountability.

A Flight Still in Progress

Is AFCAC delivering on its bold ambitions? The answer is a measured "in progress." The commission has successfully placed an unprecedented vision for African aviation firmly on the agenda and achieved foundational progress in safety and policy frameworks. However, the transition from ambitious protocol to daily reality remains its greatest challenge.

The blueprint is masterful, but the continent now awaits the full-scale construction. AFCAC's success will not be measured by signatures on a document, but by the tangible experience of a traveler booking a direct, affordable flight between African capitals, and by the robust growth of the airlines that operate them.

The ambition is clear; the final approach to landing it is now the critical phase. The coming years will determine if African aviation soars as a single, integrated market or remains, in large part, a constellation of disconnected national flights.



ExecuJet SA Gains Key FAA and African Renewals

Johannesburg Facility's Renewed FAA and Multi-Nation Approvals Underpin Africa's Surging Business Aviation Demand

ExecuJet MRO Services South Africa, a strategic wholly-owned subsidiary of Dassault Aviation, has fortified its position as the continent's premier business aviation maintenance provider by successfully renewing its critical regulatory approvals from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and eight key African civil aviation authorities.

The comprehensive re-certifications—granted by the authorities of South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, and Zambia—represent the most extensive network of regulatory accreditations held by any Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) organization in Africa.

This achievement allows ExecuJet to provide seamless, certified maintenance support across a vast geographic footprint, eliminating logistical and bureaucratic hurdles for aircraft operators.

A Benchmark for Quality and Compliance

The approvals followed rigorous audits conducted at ExecuJet's 8,000-square-meter flagship facility at



Lanseria International Airport (FALA) in Johannesburg. Auditors conducted a deep-dive assessment of the organization's maintenance record traceability, engineering personnel qualifications, certification processes, and quality control systems, ensuring alignment with the highest international safety and technical standards.

"This milestone transcends mere compliance," stated Vince Goncalves, Regional Vice President for Africa at ExecuJet MRO Services. "It is a direct reflection of our unwavering technical capability, procedural excellence, and the profound trust we have cultivated with regulatory bodies across multiple jurisdictions. For our clients, it means guaranteed continuity and peace of

mind, regardless of where their aircraft operate on the continent."

Positioned for a Continent on the Rise

The renewals come at a pivotal moment for African business aviation. The market is experiencing accelerated expansion, with over 400 business jets and turboprops now active across the region.

This growth is driven by rising corporate investment, resource sector activity, and an increasing preference for efficient, point-to-point travel. "We are observing a clear and sustained growth trajectory," Goncalves added.

"This includes new aircraft deliveries to established owners and a significant trend of international charter

operators basing fleets within Africa to serve rising intra-continental and global demand. These dynamics underscore Africa's rapidly ascending importance in the global business aviation ecosystem."

ExecuJet's Lanseria facility is uniquely equipped to support this boom. As a Dassault Aviation-owned center, it is an authorized service facility for Falcon jets, while also holding approvals for a wide range of other business aircraft manufacturers, including Bombardier, Gulfstream, Embraer, and Textron Aviation.

The facility offers comprehensive airframe, engine, and component maintenance, as well as interior refurbishment, avionics upgrades, and dedicated 24/7 AOG (Aircraft on Ground) support.

By consolidating its regulatory standing, ExecuJet MRO South Africa not only reinforces its own market leadership but also provides a critical pillar of infrastructure and reliability for the entire region's burgeoning business aviation sector, enabling safer and more efficient operations for years to come.



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Vincent M. Mupenzi

The 2025 Egypt Defense Expo (EDEX), held in Cairo's expansive Egypt International Exhibition Center, emerged not merely as a trade show but as a geopolitical statement of intent. In a region witnessing unprecedented strategic shifts, EDEX 2025 served as the definitive platform where Middle Eastern strategic autonomy met global defense industry pragmatism.

Unlike previous editions focused on procurement, this year's theme centered on localized innovation, strategic partnerships, and the emergence of an Eastern-oriented defense ecosystem. Key Themes & Strategic Implications

The Emergence of the "Cairo Consensus": Local Production as Sovereign Imperative

The dominant narrative of EDEX 2025 was the unapologetic push for localized manufacturing and technology transfer, moving beyond mere procurement.

- Egypt's "Defense 360" Strategy: Egypt showcased not just platforms, but an integrated defense industrial ecosystem. The state-owned Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI) unveiled:
- "Sinai-1" Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV): A domestically-produced MALE (Medium Altitude, Long Endurance) drone with AI-enabled targeting, signaling a leap in indigenous R&D.
- "Fahd-300" Wheeled Armored Vehicle Assembly Line: A full-scale display of the production process for the modernized



variant, highlighting deep manufacturing capacity.

- Regional Emulation: The Saudi Arabian Military Industries (SAMI) pavilion, nearly as large as Egypt's, mirrored this theme with displays of its in-production "Al-Masmak" MRAP and guided munitions. The message was clear: The Gulf's "Vision 2030" and Egypt's industrialization drive are converging on defense indigenization as a pillar of national security policy.

The Eastern Axis Solidifies: Russia & China as Partners, Not Just Suppliers

Western pavilions, while present, were notably overshadowed in terms of headline-making announcements and high-level engagement. The spotlight firmly belonged to deepening strategic partnerships with Eastern powers.

- China's "System-of-Systems" Showcase: China's exhibit, its



largest at EDEX to date, moved beyond selling individual platforms to marketing integrated battle networks.

1. HQ-9BE Long-Range Air Defense System: Positioned as the cornerstone of a national air defense umbrella, with discussions focused on joint production.
2. J-10C "Firebird" Fighter: Pilots from the Egyptian Air Force were seen conducting detailed walkarounds, fueling speculation of a follow-on order to the existing fleet.
3. Strategic Messaging: The emphasis was on interoperability between Chinese land, air, and naval systems, offering an alternative to the complex, politically-restricted Western ecosystems.
4. Russia's Resilient Presence: Despite operational challenges, Russia maintained a significant presence, focusing on air defense, upgrades, and niche capabilities.
5. S-400 Promotion: Intense discussions were observed with several North African delegations.
6. "Checkmate" Light Tactical Aircraft: A full-scale model of the Sukhoi Su-75 drew sustained attention, presented as a cost-effective, 5th-generation option for regional air forces.
7. Hybrid Warfare Solutions: Russian firms showcased advanced electronic warfare (EW) and cyber defense suites, catering to the region's asymmetric security concerns.

The Turkish Ascent: From Regional Player to Global Defense Exporter

Turkey's pavilion was arguably the busiest and most commercially aggressive at the show, reflecting its dramatic rise as a defense industry power.

- Bayraktar's Ecosystem: Baykar displayed the "Kızılelma" unmanned fighter jet and the long-endurance "Akıncı" UCAV, with multiple Egyptian and Gulf officials in prolonged technical discussions. The focus was on creating a complete ISR-strike ecosystem.
- Land Systems Dominance: BMC, FNSS, and Otokar showcased the latest variants of the "Altay" main battle tank, armored vehicles, and missile systems. Signed LOIs with Kuwait and Oman were announced on-site.
- Strategic Messaging: Turkey is no longer just a NATO member selling drones; it is a full-spectrum defense partner offering competitive financing, swift delivery, and zero

political strings—a potent value proposition.

The Western Response: Niche Excellence & Legacy Sustainment
Western exhibitors (Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Thales, Leonardo) adopted a more subdued, pragmatic posture.

- Focus on Upgrades & Integration: Major announcements centered on modernization packages for existing platforms (F-16s, Mirage 2000s, Frigates) and missile defense integration (e.g., integrating European radars with existing Arab air defense networks).
- High-End, Niche Capabilities: The US pavilion highlighted cyber warfare, space-based surveillance, and AI for C4ISR—areas where it retains a qualitative edge. The pitch shifted from "buy our jet" to "enhance your network with our enabling technologies."

The New Battlefield: Unmanned & Asymmetric Warfare

The entire hall was dominated by unmanned systems, reflecting the doctrinal lessons from recent conflicts.

- Swarming Technology: Multiple companies, from Israeli startups to Polish defense firms, demonstrated low-cost drone swarming capabilities for saturation attacks.
- Counter-UAS Solutions: An entire sector was dedicated to anti-drone systems, from jamming guns to high-power microwave and laser defenses, highlighting the acute operational concern.
- Loitering Munitions: The Israeli "Harop" and Turkish "Kargu" had numerous counterparts from China, Serbia, and the UAE, demonstrating the commoditization of this capability.

Notable Absences & Strategic Silences

- Major Western Fighter Jet Orders: No announcements for new F-35, Rafale, or Eurofighter Typhoon squadrons. The fighter market appeared paused for strategic reevaluation.
- The "GCC Unified Command" Vision: While individual Gulf states were active, there was little visible progress on the once-touted unified GCC defense industrial strategy, suggesting national programs are taking precedence.

Conclusion:

A New Defense Geography

EDEX 2025 crystallized the emergence of a multipolar defense landscape in the Middle East and North Africa. The era of regional powers as passive customers is over. Egypt, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are now industrial partners and innovators, driving hard bargains for technology and production rights.

The strategic winner of EDEX 2025 is the model of flexible, non-aligned procurement. Nations are building "hybrid defense architectures": Western platforms for high-end air dominance and networking, Eastern systems for strategic deterrence and volume, and indigenous/Turkish solutions for asymmetric and regional conflict.

The show's legacy will be its demonstration that defense industrialization is the new currency of strategic sovereignty in an uncertain world. Cairo is no longer just a market; it has positioned itself as a pivotal hub in the re-globalization of defense, where East and West compete not just for sales, but for long-term technological and strategic alignment.



HOW AIRPORT EXPANSION IS TRANSFORMING KENYA'S COAST

Harriet James

Kenya's coast is on the cusp of a tourism renaissance, driven in large part by a series of airport upgrades aimed at making the region more accessible to domestic and international travelers. At the heart of this transformation is Diani Airport, formerly known as Ukunda Airstrip, which is being reimagined as a regional gateway capable of handling larger aircraft, accommodating more passengers, and connecting the pristine beaches of Diani directly to Kenya's domestic hubs and potentially international destinations.

Once a modest airstrip serving light aircraft, Diani Airport is now 90 percent complete in its upgrade. The project includes a new taxiway, expanded apron, improved drainage systems, and a runway extension that allows mid-size aircraft, such as the Bombardier Q400, to land safely.

The terminal building is currently in the tendering stage, with plans to expand passenger capacity and amenities. The upgrade, already operational in some aspects, is attracting more frequent flights from airlines like Jambojet and Safarilink, reducing the reliance on Mombasa's Moi

International Airport and the long drive past the congested Likoni Ferry.

"The ultimate goal is to elevate Diani Airport to international status," says Havar Bauck, founder of Hotel Online. "Direct flights from East Africa and beyond would fundamentally change how travelers access the Kenyan coast, creating new opportunities for tourism and trade."

Local tourism stakeholders are already feeling the impact. Dr. Sam Ikwaye, Executive Officer of the Kenya Association of Hotel Keepers and Caterers, notes that the upgraded runway has made travel more convenient and affordable. "Bigger aircraft can now land at optimum capacity, which improves ticket pricing, frequency, and overall accessibility. This has led to a noticeable increase in tourist arrivals," he says.

With the new infrastructure, domestic routes are rapidly expanding. Frequent flights from Nairobi, Eldoret, Kisumu, and Kitale are now possible, connecting inland tourists directly to the coast. Some airlines are even exploring routes from Isiolo or national parks like Maasai Mara and Amboseli, integrating Kenya's tourism destinations into a seamless travel network. Bauck envisions a future where Diani could see direct connections from Entebbe, Rwanda, or Mwanza, positioning it as a strategic hub for both regional and international visitors.



Yet, while infrastructure upgrades are crucial, experts stress that airport expansion alone cannot solve Kenya's accessibility challenges. Bauck highlights the need to liberalize air access policies, noting that protectionist measures favoring national carriers have historically limited competition and kept airfares high.

He cites Zanzibar as a success story, where liberal air access has lowered return fares from Nairobi to as little as USD 270, driving record tourist arrivals. "Kenya has all the potential to emulate this model," he says. "Open skies, fair competition, and more foreign carriers would make the Kenyan coast far more competitive."

Malindi Airport, long overlooked despite its northern coastal location, is now receiving renewed attention. For years, the small facility could only accommodate light aircraft, forcing international travelers—particularly Italian tourists—to land in Mombasa and undertake a two- to three-hour road transfer to Malindi or Watamu. The resulting logistical inconvenience limited tourism growth in northern Kilifi, even though the region boasts untouched beaches, rich Swahili culture, and vibrant coastal communities.

Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Miano confirmed during the Uganda–Kenya Coast Tourism

Conference in Malindi that the airport's expansion is back on the agenda. The plan involves lengthening the runway, modernizing the terminal, and upgrading navigational systems to international standards. "We want to ensure visitors can access Kenya more easily and that coastal destinations benefit from increased connectivity," Miano said.

"Malindi Airport must open its doors wider," he said. "Direct flights from Europe and the Middle East will not only save travelers time but also attract investment and create jobs." Stakeholders agree that, if implemented, the expansion could spur a multiplier effect: boosting hotel occupancy, stimulating local businesses, and encouraging the growth of high-end resorts and boutique tourism offerings.

Mombasa's Moi International Airport also faces pressure to modernize. Tourism operators like Monika Solanki, Chair of the Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO) Coast, argue that the current terminal is outdated and unappealing. "A modern facility, similar to Zanzibar's Terminal 3 run by Dubai Airports' Dnata, would transform the visitor experience and reinforce Mombasa's position as a global tourism gateway," Solanki notes.

Solanki highlights the potential of Mombasa Old Town, which could be revitalized as a pedestrian-friendly zone with craft shops, cafes, and cultural experiences reminiscent of Zanzibar's Stone Town. Proper planning, she argues, could turn neglected spaces into vibrant tourist hubs, complementing airport upgrades and improving the overall visitor experience.

While Diani and Malindi airports are central to these efforts, industry players advocate for a holistic approach to coastal tourism development. This includes modernizing other regional airports, integrating them into the domestic and international flight network, and ensuring liberalized airspace policies that encourage competition.

Fully embracing the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) could open Kenya's skies to more carriers, making flights affordable and boosting arrivals. Bauck projects that with competition and improved air infrastructure, a return flight from Europe could cost as little as USD 400–500—levels that would drive tourism numbers toward the government's target of 5.5 million visitors by 2027.

The combination of infrastructure development, airspace liberalization, and service improvements has the potential to reposition the Kenyan coast as a globally competitive destination. Direct international flights to Diani, Malindi, and Moi International Airport would reduce travel time, increase convenience, and spread the economic benefits of tourism more evenly along the coast. Meanwhile, careful planning of urban spaces, markets, and cultural sites would ensure that the visitor experience remains authentic, sustainable, and attractive.



Concorde's Unforgettable Landing in Kenya, 1975

Sembajjwe Robert

Concorde's unforgettable landing in Kenya became a historic moment for aviation fans across Africa, marking one of the most remarkable test flights in history. The supersonic jet landed at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in 1975 and it was captured in the footage below.

Engineers needed real performance data in hot and high-altitude conditions to work out whether Concorde was feasible in such extreme weather.

For the thousands of people who gathered to watch, the appearance of the world's fastest supersonic passenger jet felt like witnessing the future arriving on some random day.

The 1975 flight was designed to test the iconic supersonic airplane, Concorde, in an environment far more challenging than its usual routes.

Nairobi's elevation and heat made it an ideal location for engineers from the British Aircraft Corporation and Aérospatiale to study how the aircraft performed during takeoff, landing, and high-speed maneuvers.



Test pilots ran several altitude and acceleration tests, pushing the jet to gather data that would influence its certification process in the future.

The visit also showed off the Concorde to an audience that rarely had the chance to experience advanced aerospace tech up close. Crowds gathered at the airport to watch the sleek supersonic plane appear over the horizon, and for many in attendance, the sight was a moment that would stay with them forever.

At the time of Concorde's retirement in 2003, it had solidified its position as an icon of global speed and innovation. Its ability to fly at Mach 2 and cross the Atlantic in three and a half hours set a target that modern commercial aviation has yet to match.

Yet, among its many stops around the world, the Nairobi visit stands out as a defining chapter in Africa's aviation story. It symbolized progress, ambition, and the continent's willingness to explore cutting-edge aerospace research and development. The day the Concorde touched down in Kenya remains a source of excitement and pride for fans of aviation across Africa, another moment in which the Concorde made history simply by landing.

Key milestones in Concorde's supersonic story

- 1956: UK and France begin discussions for a supersonic passenger aircraft
- 1962: Official Anglo-French treaty signed to develop Concorde
- 1969: First Concorde prototype takes flight in Toulouse
- 1973: Concorde hits Mach 2 for the first time during testing
- 1976: First commercial flights launched with British Airways and Air France
- 1985: Concorde used for transatlantic VIP trips and iconic charters
- 1996: Fastest transatlantic crossing set – New York to London in 2h 52m
- 2003: Final commercial Concorde flight marks the end of supersonic travel

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Review

Wendy Cella Nyawede

The 57th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) was held in Luanda, Angola from the 30 November – 02 December 2025.

The Assembly convened at a critical juncture for the continent's aviation sector.

Against the backdrop of steady traffic recovery, persistent operational hurdles, and ambitious continental integration projects, the assembly served as a platform to assess progress, confront challenges, and solidify a collective roadmap. The overarching theme, "Sustainable Skies, connected Africa" set a forward-looking agenda focused on resilience and competitiveness.

Core Themes and Strategic Discussions

The Centrality of SAF Implementation

A primary focus was accelerating the adoption of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) as a non-negotiable for the industry's future. Discussions moved beyond advocacy to pragmatic hurdles:

- **Supply & Infrastructure:** Emphasized the urgent need for viable SAF production projects on the continent to overcome dependency on costly imports. Calls were made for Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and

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THE 57TH AGA DEMONSTRATED AFRAA'S EVOLUTION FROM A TALKING SHOP TO A MORE RESULTS-ORIENTED COALITION





incentives to attract investment.

- **Affordability & Competitiveness:** Recognized the severe cost burden SAF places on African carriers already operating on thin margins. The assembly strongly advocated for global financial mechanisms and equitable policies to prevent African airlines from being penalized in international markets.

2. Advancing the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM)

While SAATM remains the cardinal policy, the discourse reflected a shift from mere ratification to operationalization and benefit realization.

- **"Champion States" Initiative:** Highlighted the strategy of building momentum through sub-regional clusters of fully implementing states to create tangible success stories.
- **Removing Non-Tariff Barriers:** Focused on persistent, practical impediments like restrictive visa regimes, high user charges, and inefficient customs/immigration processes at airports.
- **Fifth Freedom Focus:** Encouraged member airlines to actively pursue fifth freedom traffic rights where granted, to demonstrate SAATM's commercial value.

Financial Resilience & Cost Reduction

In a high-cost operating environment, financial sustainability was a dominant thread:

- **Blocked Funds Crisis:** Condemned the alarming rise in

airline revenues trapped in several African countries (notably Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Malawi), labeling it the single biggest threat to liquidity and operations.

- **Advocacy for Fair Taxation:** Renewed calls for governments to review taxes, fees, and charges that overburden airlines, including taxes on jet fuel.
- **Fleet Modernization:** Stressed the necessity of transitioning to newer, fuel-efficient aircraft to lower operational costs, contingent on innovative financing solutions.

Safety, Security, and Human Capital

- **Safety:** Celebrated Africa's improved safety record but cautioned against complacency, emphasizing continuous investment in safety management systems (SMS) and IOSA compliance.
- **Human Capital:** Flagged a looming skills shortage for pilots, technicians, and ATCOs. The assembly called for collaborative, pan-African training initiatives and the modernization of training curricula.

Notable Outcomes & Leadership

- **Unified Advocacy Position:** The AGA culminated in a joint declaration to be presented to the African Union (AU) and national governments, outlining clear demands on SAF support, blocked funds, and SAATM implementation.
- **Industry Partnerships:** Strengthened collaborative frameworks with key partners like IATA, ACI Africa, and Boeing/Airbus to align on core advocacy issues.

Analysis and Forward Look

The 57th AGA demonstrated AFRAA's evolution from a talking shop to a more results-oriented coalition. Key takeaways include:

- **Pragmatism over Idealism:** The focus on "champion states" for SAATM and practical SAF projects shows a strategic understanding that incremental, demonstrable progress is more effective than waiting for continent-wide unanimity.
- **The Sustainability Imperative:** SAF is no longer a side discussion but a central pillar of strategic planning, directly tied to future market access and competitiveness.
- **The Liquidity Crisis:** Unblocking funds is an immediate survival issue, likely to dominate bilateral engagements in 2025/2026. AFRAA's ability to lobby successfully on this will be a key performance indicator.
- **Collaborative Imperative:** The tone reinforced that no single airline can solve systemic challenges. Success hinges on unprecedented collaboration—through joint ventures, shared resources (e.g., training academies, spare parts pooling), and a unified lobbying voice.

The 57th AFRAA AGA successfully diagnosed the critical pressures facing African aviation—financial fragility, environmental mandates, and fragmented markets—while charting a collaborative path toward sustainability and growth.

The assembly's success will be measured not by its resolutions, but by the tangible de-blocking of funds, the launch of the first viable African SAF projects, and the expansion of seamless air connectivity under SAATM in the year ahead. The sector's stakeholders have a clearer, shared agenda; the monumental task of execution now begins.

SOARING AFRICA:

Boeing Forecasts Aviation Fleet to Double by 2044 on Surging Passenger Demand

Vincent M. Mupenzi
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Africa's aviation sector is poised for a transformative two decades, with the continent's commercial airplane fleet projected to more than double by 2044, driven by the world's fastest-growing passenger traffic. This is the headline finding from Boeing's newly released 2025 Commercial Market Outlook (CMO) for Africa, which forecasts a 20-year requirement for 1,205 new commercial aircraft to meet surging demand.

The region's fleet will expand from approximately 750 aircraft today to over 1,680 jets by 2044. This growth, representing a 6% annual increase in passenger traffic, will be fueled by Africa's potent demographic and economic cocktail: the world's youngest population, a rapidly expanding middle class, breakneck urbanization, and sweeping investments in airport infrastructure and continental connectivity.

The Single-Aisle Revolution: Connecting a Continent

The backbone of this expansion will be the versatile single-aisle jet, such as the Boeing 737 MAX. Accounting for over 70% of new deliveries (865 aircraft), these efficient planes are the ideal tool for airlines to capitalize on two simultaneous trends: the boom in intra-African travel and the expansion of short-haul international routes to Europe and the Middle East.

"The single-aisle segment will be the engine of Africa's aviation growth," said Shahab Matin, Boeing's Managing Director of



Commercial Marketing for the Middle East and Africa. "This reflects a clear strategic shift where African carriers, especially low-cost airlines, are poised to unlock affordable, frequent travel within the continent—a market with historically prohibitive fares and limited connections."

A Multi-Faceted Economic Catalyst

Boeing's outlook underscores that aviation's impact extends far beyond the runway.

- **Jobs & Talent:** The fleet expansion will create a projected demand for 74,000 new aviation professionals—including pilots, technicians, and cabin crew—over the next 20 years.
- **Services Boom:** Supporting this growing fleet will generate a \$130 billion market for aviation services, encompassing maintenance, repair, training, and digital solutions to ensure operational resilience.



- **Economic Ripple Effect:** The report highlights aviation's critical role in stimulating tourism, facilitating trade, enabling new investment corridors, and supporting thousands of indirect jobs in sectors from hospitality to manufacturing.

"Aviation is not just a sector; it is a catalyst for Africa's broader economic integration and expansion," Matin emphasized. "The growth we've witnessed over the past 20 years is merely a foundation. More efficient, versatile airplanes, paired with strategies to make air travel more accessible, will unlock unprecedented opportunities for the region's airlines and their hub cities."

Widebody Modernization and Freighter Potential

While single-aisle jets will dominate by volume, the report also identifies strong demand for 240 new widebody aircraft, such as the 787 Dreamliner. This demand is driven by established carriers' plans to modernize their long-haul fleets and launch new direct routes connecting Africa to Asia and the Americas, enhancing global trade and tourism links.

Furthermore, the developing air cargo market presents a strategic opportunity. With a forecast for 10 new factory-built freighters, Boeing points to Africa's growing export logistics in perishables (flowers, fresh produce), minerals, and e-commerce as key demand drivers.

Africa Commercial Market Outlook (2025-2044) - Summary Forecast

Aircraft Type	New Deliveries	Primary Growth Driver
Regional Jet	90	Feeder traffic to major hubs
Single-Aisle	865	Domestic & regional network expansion, LCC growth
Widebody	240	Long-haul route expansion & fleet modernization
Freighter	10	Growing export logistics & intra-continental trade
TOTAL	1,205	

Looking Ahead:

Boeing's 2025 CMO presents a future where Africa's aviation growth is both a cause and a consequence of its economic rise.



The doubling of the fleet represents more than just metal on tarmac; it symbolizes a dramatic increase in connectivity that will shrink business distances, empower tourism, and integrate Africa's economies more deeply with each other and the world. The challenge for stakeholders—governments, airlines, and infrastructure providers—will be to ensure that regulatory frameworks, talent development, and airport capacity grow in lockstep with this accelerating demand.



Cabotage

The right to operate sea, air, or other transport services

AFRICA POISED TO REDEFINE THE FUTURE OF CABOTAGE

Taremwa Spencer Agabus

Aviation cabotage can be easily understood as transport of goods and passengers between different points within the same country.

Chicago convention (1944) further defined it allowing countries to refuse permission to foreign aircraft to carry out our transport domestically.

As the African aviation passenger and cargo

market is increasing, domestic travel by air is steadily picking up. From new airports (multiple) within African countries is a major indicator of connectivity passenger and cargo traffic that is growing every year.

Many domestic aviation companies are also expanding their operations prompting major Airlines to consider investing in domestic carriers through direct involvement and partnerships with existing local carriers.

Reference to Kenya Airways partnership with



within a territory.

Safarilink where Safarilink completing journey of tourists to various game parks. Plans by Uganda Airlines are underway to acquire caravans to operate domestically between regions.

Economic Transformation

Nations are on the path to foster industry growth and long term economic development. Local aviation increases economic activity in areas where local aviation facilities are established. This calls for more protection of local airlines to enable them continue operating and expanding without facing foreign competition.

Employment Boom

Cabotage safeguards jobs within the domestic aviation industry. This increases nurturing of communities into various aviation related roles and careers from technical operations to non-technical operations like support services. A significant part of national community is absorbed into local aviation industry growing the job market.

Market Access

New markets both for cargo and passengers will be opened up

adding to already existing ones increasing in revenue due to more cargo and passenger traffic.

Trade is eased due to more air transport connectivity in the different parts of the nations where foreign airlines cannot operate.

Improved Services

The competitiveness fostered by cabotage is to benefit people through fair fares and better service provision. As local airlines try to get significant shares of local aviation market, a need to attract passenger and cargo traffic is weighed by their service delivery and reliability.

Relief and Security

Cabotage provides a robust national air transport network that offers more than just cargo and passenger traffic. In times of national tragedy or emergency, first responders easily access remote regions together with needed items. Refer to local aviation relief efforts like United Nations reliance on cabotage network for humanitarian activities.

Tourism

Cabotage is the biggest enabler of foreign to domestic tourism as it eases travel time access for tourists to transit to different points in a nation. Journeys of long hours by road are cut into half of less the time enabling tourists to visit various places around these countries.

The creation of new airport projects offers further advantages for African countries to improve on cabotage laws in support of greater benefits it adds to the whole African local and international aviation industry in general.

Health

Air ambulances and use of air transport contribute to saving lives due to timely delivery of health-related services. In parts hit by disaster and severe health emergencies, timely response to affected people in areas far from major health establishments. Local aviation plays the vital role of timely delivery of medical personnel, medicine and equipment thus saving lives through reducing or containing the size of a health emergency with timely response.

Thankfully, many local airlines have already embraced operational use of air ambulances in their fleet across different parts of Africa with partnerships with various health facilities.

With local aviation companies looking to further strengthen their local presence. Scheduling consistent connectivity to regional parts of their nations increases their cargo and passenger traffic due to operational reliability.

African governments, industry players and other stake holders in aviation industry continued fostering of better policies to safeguard and create room for further growth for local aviation is very important. More sturdiness of the whole transport industry is greatly re-affirmed through further easing more timely movement of growing local air passengers and cargo.

TAAAG AIRLINES

Analysis of the Airlines Growth Potential



Angola's TAAAG Linhas Aéreas de Angola stands at a critical inflection point. As Angola's flag carrier with a near-monopoly on domestic routes and a strategic Lusophone network, its growth potential is significant but heavily conditioned by structural reforms, geopolitical positioning, and operational modernization.

Current Position & Strategic Assets

Fleet & Network (as of 2024):

- Fleet: 20–25 aircraft, primarily Boeing 777s, 737s, and De Havilland Dash 8s. Recent modernization focuses on fuel-efficient 777-300ERs and 737 MAX orders.
- Hub: Luanda's Quatro de Fevereiro Airport, with a planned

Major Constraints & Risks

Constraint	Impact	Mitigation Required
Economic Volatility	Angola's oil-dependent economy causes demand swings and currency (kwanza) instability.	Diversify revenue streams (cargo, tra pax, MRO services).
Operational Inefficiency	High costs, low aircraft utilization, bureaucratic management.	Professionalize management, adopt I Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) best practices.
Regional Competition	Ethiopian, RwandAir, and Air Tanzania are aggressively expanding in overlapping markets.	Differentiate with superior Lusophon connectivity and hub efficiency.
Infrastructure Delays	New airport delays or poor operational design could stall hub ambitions.	Ensure seamless transition with priva terminal operators.
Political Interference	History of unprofitable state-mandated routes and employment pressures.	Establish clear commercial mandate f management.

transition to the new Dr. António Agostinho Neto International Airport (capable of handling 15M+ passengers annually).

- Network: Strong regional dominance in Southern/Central Africa, key international routes to Lisbon, Porto, Brazil (São Paulo), and emerging Middle Eastern/Asian connections.

Strengths:

- Geo-strategic Hub Potential: Angola's location offers a natural bridge between South America, Southern Africa, and Western Europe.
- Domestic Monopoly: Control over critical domestic oil & gas, government, and business traffic.
- Government Support: State ownership allows long-term strategic planning and access to sovereign financing.
- Strong Cargo Base: Leverages Angola's oil/gas and diamond logistics demand.

Growth Potential & Strategic Pillars

A. Short-to-Medium Term (1–5 Years)

Fleet Rationalization & Modernization:

- Successful integration of Boeing 737 MAX and eventual 777X or A350s will lower operational costs and expand range.
- Critical need: Shift from maintenance-heavy older fleet to improve dispatch reliability (historically ~70%, needs >90%).



Hub Transformation:

- Move to the new Luanda airport could position TAAG as a West-Central African mega-hub, competing with Addis Ababa (Ethiopian) and Nairobi (Kenya Airways) for transit traffic to the Americas and Asia.

Regional Network Expansion:

- Potential to dominate the "Lusophone Corridor" (Brazil-Portugal-Angola-Mozambique) and expand into underserved Central African markets (DRC, Congo, Gabon).

Long-Term (5–10+ Years)

Privatization & Partnerships:

- Partial privatization (as attempted in 2023) could inject capital and expertise. Potential partners:
- Middle Eastern carriers (Ethihad/Emirates for Europe-Africa-S. America flow).
- Portuguese capital (reinforcing Lusophone axis).
- African aviation groups (Ethiopian Airlines model).

Cargo & Logistics Hub Development:

- Angola's mineral/energy exports and agricultural potential could support a dedicated cargo hub, partnering with global logistics firms.

Tourism-Driven Expansion:

- Angola's underdeveloped tourism sector (~ 100k int'l tourists/year) could be unlocked with direct flights from Europe/Asia, packaged with visa reforms.

Competitive Analysis in Key Markets

- Europe-Angola: Dominates Lisbon route; could challenge Air France/KLM on Paris with better connections beyond Luanda.
- Africa-S. America: Uniquely positioned to capture Brazil-Angola-Central Africa traffic, a market overlooked by major Middle Eastern carriers.
- Domestic: Near-monopoly, but faces threat from low-cost entrants if market opens.

Recommended Strategic Priorities

Immediate (0–2 years):

- Achieve IATA IOSA certification (safety/operational benchmark).
- Finalize 737 MAX delivery and retire older 737s.
- Develop hub transit product for connecting passengers in Luanda.

Medium (2–5 years):

- Secure strategic equity partner (25–49% stake).
- Launch 2–3 new intercontinental routes (e.g., London, Guangzhou, Washington DC via Sal/Cabo Verde).
- Establish TAAG Cargo as a standalone profit center.

Long-term (5+ years):

- Transform into a multipolar hub airline, with Luanda as primary hub and secondary bases in Mozambique or Cabo Verde.
- Develop MRO and pilot training center for Central/Southern Africa.

Cautious Optimism with Heavy Caveats

TAAG's growth potential is fundamentally tied to Angola's macroeconomic and governance reforms. If the airline can:

- Decouple from state patronage and operate commercially,
- Exploit the Lusophone niche while competing on core African routes,
- Leverage the new Luanda airport as a true 21st-century hub,

Then it could evolve into a top 5 African carrier by 2035, potentially reaching 50+ aircraft and 5M+ passengers annually. However, without urgent operational and governance reforms, TAAG risks remaining a high-cost, regional player—overshadowed by nimbler rivals and trapped by Angola's economic cycles. Its future is less about aviation strategy alone and more about Angola's broader institutional maturity. High potential, but with a low probability of full realization unless unprecedented reforms are sustained. The next 3 years are make-or-break.



New Air Corridor Highlights Africa's Connectivity Puzzle

After 80 years, travelers can finally fly directly between Nairobi and Luanda. The launch of TAAG Angola Airlines' Nairobi–Luanda service is more than just a new route on the map; it is a symbolic milestone in Africa's ongoing struggle to connect its own skies.

Arrivals from Angola to Kenya have steadily increased by over 300% in the last four years.

The new direct flight is expected to significantly amplify this market's potential and increase visitor numbers from Angola. Nicanor Sibula, CEO of the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA) Angola, hailed the new service as "a great milestone for aviation not only in Kenya but also for the continent."

He noted that the flights will reinforce Nairobi's position as a regional hub for both leisure and business travel, while also opening up trade and cultural opportunities for Angola. "It helps make Africa smaller, more connected, and more competitive," Sibula said.

Yet beneath the optimism lies a sobering reality. Africa's air connectivity remains among the weakest globally. The continent is home to more than 1.4 billion people, rapidly growing economies, and some of the world's most sought-after tourism destinations. But its skies remain fragmented, costly, and underutilized.

According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), less than 20 percent of air traffic within Africa is carried by African

It helps make
Africa smaller, more
connected, and more
competitive

Nicanor Sibula, CEO, KATA



airlines. Many focus on long-haul routes to Europe or the Middle East, leaving shorter intra-African connections underserved. As a result, flying between African capitals is often more expensive and time-consuming than flying to foreign hubs such as Dubai, Istanbul, or Paris.

At the heart of this problem are protectionist policies, high taxes, and restrictive bilateral agreements that discourage competition. Europe's liberalized skies and Schengen framework allow seamless cross-border travel. Africa, by contrast, has struggled to implement its own liberalization frameworks. The Yamoussoukro Decision of 1999 and the more recent Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) were designed to break down barriers, but progress has been slow and uneven.

"Air connectivity in Africa still lags behind other regions," Sibula explained. "We face high operating costs, multiple taxes and charges, restrictive agreements, and limited liberalization. As a result, airfares remain among the highest globally, making intra-African travel less accessible for ordinary citizens."

The Nairobi–Luanda route illustrates what Africa has been missing. Angola, a major oil producer seeking to diversify its economy, now has a direct bridge to Kenya, an East African hub of finance, technology, and tourism.

The route dramatically cuts travel time, opening new opportunities for business, cultural exchange, and tourism collaboration. Yet the obvious question remains: why did it take so long?

Airlines typically base new routes on commercial viability, regulatory approvals, and strategic timing. For African carriers, the process is often slowed by protectionist governments prioritizing their national airlines. "There is no single reason why TAAG did not launch flights to Nairobi earlier," said Sibula. "But this is the right time, with the right alignment of market needs and strategic priorities."

Aviation consultant Sean Mendis cautions, however, that the success of such a route cannot rely on Nairobi–Luanda traffic

alone. "The market between Luanda and Nairobi is not large," he explained. "For TAAG to make their route successful, they have to rely on connecting passengers beyond their Luanda hub—whether that is to Brazil, Portugal, South Africa, or elsewhere."

Another challenge is that Africa's aviation market suffers from low passenger volumes and lower economic power compared to other regions. Even when routes are launched, sustaining them profitably is difficult.

"Airlines in Africa have to be smart in terms of how they deploy the right size aircraft," Mendis said.

Cost is another stumbling block. A return ticket from Nairobi to Luanda has historically cost more than a return flight to Europe. Limited competition, high operating costs, and small fleet sizes all inflate prices. Direct routes, such as this one, could help bring fares down and make intra-African travel more accessible to a growing middle class.

Still, progress is being made. Ethiopian Airlines has aggressively expanded intra-African connections, and Kenya Airways continues to pursue regional partnerships. Pan-African initiatives like SAATM hold promise for a unified airspace that lowers barriers and encourages more direct routes. But implementation depends on political will.

"To achieve a more connected Africa, we must fully implement SAATM," Sibula emphasized. "That would allow airlines greater freedom to open routes across the continent. Equally important, African carriers must foster stronger partnerships—through code-sharing, alliances, or joint ventures—to expand networks and ensure long-term viability."

Mendis, however, warns against overreliance on promised reforms.

"SAATM, and even its predecessor the Yamoussoukro Decision, have been talked about for decades—longer than most Africans have been alive. While the vision of open skies is compelling, it won't by itself fix the structural challenges. If we wait for that alone, we may be waiting for generations to come."



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Turbulence:

Tips To Avoid Wake Turbulence During Takeoff and Landing



That familiar ATC advisory is more than a courtesy—it's a critical alert. Here's what every pilot must know to navigate the invisible danger. "Caution—wake turbulence."

For many pilots, this radio call blends into the flow of clearances and traffic advisories. But behind these three words lies one of aviation's most insidious hazards: the powerful, invisible vortices spinning off the wingtips of larger aircraft. Understanding how to actively avoid them isn't just good practice—it's a non-negotiable skill for safe operations in shared airspace.

Whether you're in a Skyhawk trailing a regional jet or a Bonanza following a heavy jet, the principles of wake avoidance are the same. Here's what the warning really means for you, broken down by phase of flight.

The Science Behind the Swirl

Before applying the procedures, know what you're avoiding. Wingtip vortices are counter-rotating masses of air shed from an aircraft's wings as they generate lift. They are strongest when an aircraft is heavy, clean (flaps up), and slow—precisely the conditions on takeoff and final approach. These vortices sink below and behind the generating aircraft at 400–500 feet per minute and can persist for several minutes, drifting with the wind.

On Final: Fly High, Land Long

When following a larger aircraft to the same runway, the FAA's guidance is elegantly simple and physically sound.

- Stay at or above the larger aircraft's glide path. Vortices descend. By maintaining a higher approach, you keep your wings in undisturbed air.

- Note their touchdown point and land beyond it. Vortices cease at the moment the preceding aircraft's wheels touch down. By landing past that spot, you ensure the sinking vortices remain behind and below you.

Pro Tip: If you can't visually identify the lead aircraft's touchdown point (at night or in low visibility), consider executing a slightly steeper approach or requesting a longer final to build in a natural safety margin.

On Departure: The Climb-Out Challenge

Avoiding wake on takeoff is trickier. A Boeing 737 may rotate at your Cessna's midfield point and be 1,000 feet above you before you've cleaned up. The strategy here is twofold:

- Rotate before their rotation point. Lift off sooner than the preceding aircraft did. This keeps you above their initial vortex generation zone near the ground.
- Maneuver away from their flight path. After lift-off, climb and turn. Do not follow the same centerline climb-out. A shallow bank away from the departure path can keep you clear of vortices drifting down and out from the jet's climb corridor.

The Wind Factor

Wind is your guide. Vortices drift downwind at the wind speed. A 10-knot crosswind moves them roughly 1,000 feet per minute. Therefore, the safest post-takeoff turn is toward the upwind side. This actively moves you away from the drift path of any vortices lingering from the prior departure.

The Ultimate Strategy:

The Time Buffer; When in doubt, wait it out. Vortices lose strength rapidly. The FAA states that a 3-minute interval at the same point in space provides a high margin of safety for dissipation. This is often the simplest and most effective tool, especially at busy towered fields where immediate maneuvering may not be possible. Don't hesitate to request additional spacing if you feel unsafe.

A Pilot's Mental Checklist

Next time you hear "caution—wake turbulence," pause and run this brief mental drill:

- Identify: What type of aircraft created it? (Heavy, large, or small?)
- Visualize: Where are the vortices now? (Sinking and drifting downwind.)
- Act: Which avoidance tactic will I use? (High/long landing, early rotation and turn, or delay?)

Wake turbulence respect isn't about fear—it's about spatial awareness and proactive planning. That ATC advisory is your cue to switch from passive listening to active risk management. By integrating these strategies into your scan and decision-making, you transform a routine warning into a definitive plan for staying in smooth, safe air.



Dubai Airshow 2025

RECAP

The 2025 Dubai Airshow, returning to its full scale after geopolitical and supply chain disruptions earlier in the decade, was less a show of spectacular record-breaking orders and more a strategic statement of the aviation industry's maturing priorities.

The event underscored three dominant themes: strategic fleet consolidation, intense new market competition, and the unavoidable rise of sustainability as a commercial reality.

Order Trends: Strategic Upgrades Over Megadeals

Gone were the eye-popping, purely volume-driven announcements of previous editions. Instead, carriers focused on strategic fleet optimization, reflecting a post-pandemic focus on profitability and operational efficiency.

The Big Moves:

- Emirates confirmed its long-awaited Boeing 777X order (a mix of -8 and -9 variants) to eventually replace its A380s, but the numbers were pragmatic, not staggering. A significant portion of the commitment was converting existing options, signaling cautious fleet growth.
- Air India returned with another substantial widebody order, splitting commitments between the Boeing 777X and the Airbus A350-1000, as it methodically executes its multi-hub transformation strategy.
- Turkish Airlines made headlines with a narrowbody mega-order, but split it strategically between the Airbus A321neo and Boeing 737 MAX 10, securing delivery slots and supplier leverage.

The Trend:

The era of the 500+ unit order from a single airline appears to be giving way to more frequent, tailored deals of 50-150 aircraft, often with conversion rights. This shows airlines valuing flexibility and precise fleet planning above all.

The New Market Battle: China's Arrival & Regional Ambition



Dubai Airshow

The most significant competitive shift was the undeniable arrival of COMAC as a mainstream player, not just a regional curiosity.

The C929's Shadow:

While not yet ready for orders, COMAC's display of its widebody C929 project model and advanced cabin mock-up was a major draw. It signaled a clear intent to challenge the Airbus-Boeing duopoly by 2035.

C919 Breakthrough:

The star of the static display was a COMAC C919, operated by a Middle Eastern lessor. Firm orders were announced from Saudi Arabia's new airline, RIA, and EgyptAir, marking the first major international airline commitments for the type outside of Asia. This represents a pivotal moment, driven by competitive pricing, attractive financing packages, and geopolitical alignment.

Regional Rivalry:

The Airbus A220 and Embraer E2 families competed fiercely for the lucrative 100-150 seat segment, with several African and Eastern European carriers announcing deals. Embraer's proposed "Guarapuava" turboprop concept also generated buzz as a potential ATR competitor.

Sustainability: From Buzzword to Business Case
Sustainability moved from the sidelines to the center of the exhibition halls and negotiation rooms.

SAF Takes Center Stage:

Major announcements focused on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) offtake agreements. Carriers like Emirates, Qatar Airways, and Etihad signed multi-year deals with global fuel suppliers, with a clear emphasis on securing supply and hedging against future carbon costs.

Technology on Display:

The "Advanced Air Mobility" (AAM) pavilion was larger than ever, with eVTOL (electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing) manufacturers like Joby Aviation, Archer, and Beta Technologies showcasing full-scale models. Several Gulf-based infrastructure firms signed MOUs to study vertiport networks in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Hydrogen & Propulsion:

Airbus provided updates on its ZEROe hydrogen program,

while startups like ZeroAvia demonstrated scale models of their hydrogen-electric powertrains for regional aircraft. The message was clear: the path to 2050 net-zero is being paved now.

Military & Advanced Tech: Geopolitics in the Static Display
The military segment reflected ongoing regional security dynamics.

Loyal Wingmen & Drones: Unmanned systems were ubiquitous. Turkish Bayraktar and Chinese Wing Loong drones drew significant attention from Global South delegations. The USAF's Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) program and similar European projects highlighted the shift towards manned-unmanned teaming.

Next-Gen Fighters: While major new fighter orders were scarce, the focus was on upgrades and integration. The Dassault Rafale and Boeing F-15EX, both recently acquired by regional powers, were featured with enhanced weaponry and sensor packages.

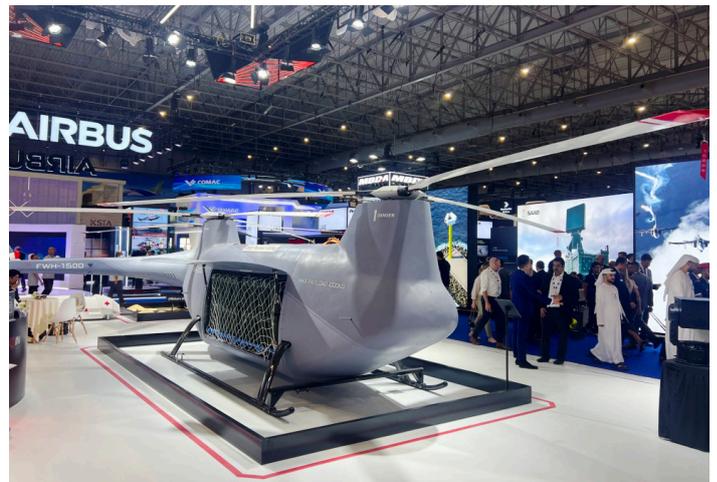
Notable Absences & Quiet Conversations

- **The A380 & 747 Farewell:** The age of the very large aircraft was officially commemorated, not celebrated. The focus was entirely on efficiency.
- **Supply Chain Diplomacy:** Behind closed doors, the most critical conversations were not about new orders, but about securing delivery slots and managing production delays. Airlines were negotiating with manufacturers to protect their positions in a still-constrained supply environment.

Final Assessment: A Show of Maturity

The Dubai Airshow 2025 did not produce the shock-and-awe order totals of 2013 or 2017. Instead, it presented an industry that has soberly assessed a new era of constraints—geopolitical, environmental, and economic. The winners were companies offering pragmatic solutions: Airbus and Boeing with their most fuel-efficient models; COMAC, which crossed a crucial credibility threshold; and the SAF and AAM sectors, whose time has demonstrably arrived.

The overarching takeaway was one of strategic consolidation. The industry is no longer simply chasing growth; it is meticulously engineering a more resilient, efficient, and sustainable future. The sky of 2025 is more complex, more competitive, and more conscious of its footprint than ever before.





Launches Global Campaign to Help Travelers Fly Safely with Lithium Batteries

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has launched 'Travel Smart with Lithium Batteries', a global safety campaign that gives travelers seven simple rules for carrying mobile phones, laptops, power banks, and other lithium-powered devices safely when they fly. The campaign will run on IATA's website and social channels and is available as white-label assets for airlines, airports, and other partners across the travel ecosystem.

According to Nick Careen, IATA's Senior Vice President, Operations, Safety and Security, Lithium-powered devices are safe when handled properly, but they can pose a risk if damaged or packed incorrectly. As more travelers fly with these devices, our Travel Smart with Lithium Batteries campaign will help airlines educate their passengers on the simple rules they must keep in mind when traveling with the electronic devices that have become an essential part of their daily lives.

Travelers Are Carrying More Devices but with Incomplete Knowledge

A recent IATA passenger survey found that most travelers fly with lithium-powered devices:

- 83% of travelers carry a phone
- 60% carry a laptop
- 44% carry a power bank

While 93% of travelers consider themselves knowledgeable on the rules for carrying lithium-powered devices (including 57% rating themselves as very familiar with the rules), critical misconceptions persist:

- 50% incorrectly believe it's OK to pack small lithium-powered devices in checked luggage
- 45% incorrectly believe it's OK to pack power banks in checked luggage
- 33% incorrectly believe that there are no power limits on power banks or spare batteries

Seven Simple Safety Rules

The campaign assets highlight seven simple rules every traveler should follow:

- Pack light: Only bring the devices and batteries you really need.
- Stay alert: If a device is hot, smoking, or damaged, tell the crew (or airport staff) immediately.
- Keep devices with you: Always carry phones, laptops, cameras, vapes (if allowed) and other battery-powered items in your hand baggage, not in checked baggage.
- Protect loose batteries: Keep spare batteries and power banks in their original packaging, or cover the terminals with tape to prevent short-circuits.
- Gate check reminder: If your hand baggage is taken at the gate to go in the aircraft baggage hold, remove all lithium batteries and devices first.
- Check battery size: For larger batteries (over 100 watt-hours, such as those used in larger cameras, drones, or power tools), check with your airline as approval may be required.
- Check airline rules: Always confirm your airline's policies, as requirements may differ in compliance with local regulations.

Industry-Wide Rollout

The multilingual campaign will be rolled out through digital assets that airlines and other partners can adapt and share with passengers, ensuring consistent safety messaging across the industry. A short, animated video, designed to make the rules simple, engaging, and easy to remember, can be used by airlines and airports on their digital and social channels.

Campaign assets will also be available to media and other entities in the aviation value chain to help educate travelers on flying safely with their lithium-powered devices.



Emirates @40

From Modest Beginnings To a Global Network



Emirates emerged out of a challenge and a vision. In the mid-1980s, when Gulf Air reduced its Dubai services, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, who was then also overseeing the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, tasked Maurice Flanagan, the head of dnata, with launching a new airline on a shoestring budget of just \$10 million.

That directive has since become legend. From two short-haul routes to Karachi and Mumbai, Emirates now serves more than 150 destinations on six continents with nearly 270 aircraft, including the world's largest fleets of Airbus A380s and Boeing 777s. It transformed Dubai from a regional trading post into a global crossroads for commerce, tourism, and culture, helping turn the

EMIRATES AIRLINES 40 YEARS JOURNEY CELEBRATIONS

- 1985**
The Beginning
Emirates was founded in Dubai with just two leased aircraft (a Boeing 757 and Airbus A300 B4) First flight took off on 25 October 1985 from Dubai to Karachi & Mum-
- 1990s**
Rapid Growth
Expanded fleet with wide-body aircraft like the Airbus A310 and Boeing 777 Introduced in-flight entertainment systems, setting new global standards Expanded routes across Europe, Asia, and Africa
- 2000s**
Global Recognition
Became one of the world's fastest growing airlines Ordered the Airbus A380, later becoming its largest operator Established Dubai as a world aviation hub Won multiple international awards for service excellence
- 2010s**
Innovation & Expansion
Operated the world's largest fleets of Airbus A580s and Boeing 777s Launched industry leading First Class Suites and enhanced in-flight Wi-Fi Expanded network to cover over 150 destinations worldwide Strengthened partnerships (e.g. with United Airlines, Qantas and others)
- 2020s**
Resilience & Future Focus
Navigated the COVID-19 pandemic ensuring safe travel and repatriation flights. Continued investment in sustainable aviation fuel and eco-friendly initiatives introduced premium economy class to enhance passenger choice
- 40 2025**
40 Years of Connecting the World
Fleet of over 260 aircraft, serving

emirate into one of the most connected cities on Earth.

Aviation as statecraft: Soft power in motion

Emirates Airlines is far more than a business enterprise. It is a deliberate instrument of aviation diplomacy. Every Emirates aircraft carrying the UAE flag functions as a flying ambassador, projecting national identity, efficiency, and modernity across the globe.

Through its sleek branding, “Fly Emirates” sponsorships of iconic football clubs like Arsenal, Real Madrid, and AC Milan, and visibility at major sporting and cultural events, from the PGA Tour to the Dubai World Cup, the airline has become one of the UAE’s most effective soft-power vehicles. These partnerships, worth hundreds of millions annually, have embedded Dubai’s name in the global imagination, associating it with excellence, cosmopolitanism, and “affordable luxury.”

Driving economic diversification and connectivity

Emirates’ rise mirrors the UAE’s broader Vision 2021 agenda to diversify its economy beyond oil. Today, hydrocarbons make up barely 1 percent of the UAE’s GDP, while tourism and aviation contribute over 11 percent. Dubai International Airport, voted the world’s best in 2023 and handling more than 80 million passengers annually, has become a linchpin of this success, linking 80 percent of the world’s population within an eight-hour flight.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when global travel ground to a halt, Emirates swiftly adapted, converting passenger planes into cargo freighters to transport vaccines and personal protective equipment worldwide. This agility and sense of responsibility reinforced both the airline’s reputation for professionalism and the UAE’s image as a dependable “nexus state” in global logistics.

Safety, security, and reputation

A cornerstone of Emirates’ global stature is its impeccable safety and security record. Over four decades of operations, the airline has maintained one of the best safety records in the industry, a critical but often understated element of its soft-power appeal. Emirates’ adherence to rigorous maintenance standards, cutting-edge training programmes, and the use of one of the world’s youngest, most technologically advanced fleets have earned it consistent recognition from aviation regulators and safety auditors.

The UAE’s robust civil aviation security framework, supported by meticulous screening, world-class airports, and stringent

international compliance, has made flying through Dubai synonymous with reliability and peace of mind. In an era of global uncertainty, this trust is itself a powerful form of influence.

Accessible luxury and cultural diplomacy

Emirates has mastered the art of “accessible luxury.” Its onboard service such as gourmet cuisine, premium entertainment, and attentive multicultural crews, creates an experience that feels aspirational yet attainable. Its lounges, loyalty programmes, and complimentary layover offers invite travellers to sample Dubai’s hospitality firsthand, often turning a stopover into a tourism experience.

This approach complements the UAE’s destination branding strategy, which markets Dubai as a city of “superlatives,” home to the Burj Khalifa, the world’s busiest airport, and a retail landscape defined by abundance. Each Emirates flight thus becomes a curated introduction to the UAE’s story of innovation, tolerance, and global connectivity.

Looking ahead: Innovation and sustainability

As Emirates enters its fifth decade, it faces new challenges shaped by sustainability imperatives, rapid digital transformation, and evolving passenger expectations. The airline has already taken decisive steps to stay ahead of these trends, investing in sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) partnerships, introducing more fuel-efficient Airbus A350s and Boeing 777Xs, retrofitting existing aircraft with advanced cabin technologies, and enhancing AI-driven operational systems to optimize routes and reduce emissions.

Emirates’ long-term strategy also includes waste-reduction initiatives, expanded carbon-offset programmes, and a commitment to sustainable catering and supply chain practices. These measures underscore its determination to lead the global aviation sector into a greener, smarter, and more resilient future.

This forward-thinking mindset echoes the UAE’s own commitment to environmental diplomacy, showcased through events such as COP28 in Dubai, and ensures that Emirates remains aligned with national goals of innovation and global leadership.

Forty years after its first flight to Karachi, Emirates Airlines remains one of the most visible and trusted symbols of the UAE’s rise on the world stage. It has bridged continents, cultures, and communities not through coercion or power projection, but through connection, credibility, and care.





SUGAR BEETS TO BOOST SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUEL

JUICE IS
EXTRACTED
FROM THE
SUGAR BEET AND
USED TO MAKE
BIOETHANOL



Imagine powering long-haul aircraft with fuels derived from just air, water and renewable electricity. This is moving from science fiction to the verge of reality, thanks to the falling price of renewables like wind and solar.

Sky Renewables is partnering with central Queensland farmers to grow sugar beets as a feedstock for biofuels. As the COP30 climate talks in Brazil come to a close, it is hoped that clear targets will incentivise further investment.

Sugar beet has not been grown here for almost a century, but as the need for sustainable aviation fuels intensifies, it could be making an Australian comeback.

Biofuel company Sky Renewables has partnered with eight central Queensland farmers to trial growing the crop as a feedstock for renewable energy. Traditionally grown in Europe, Russia and the United States to produce sugar, beets were first grown in Victoria's Gippsland region in the late 1800s, but the industry collapsed after World War II.

Whereas burning today's fuels releases carbon into the atmosphere that has been sequestered underground for millions of years, these "e-fuels" would be more environmentally friendly, adding and subtracting carbon from the air in roughly equal quantities.

E-fuels sit within the broader category of synthetic fuels, which are vital for sectors like aviation and shipping that won't be able to switch to electric power or clean fuels such as hydrogen any time soon.

Synthetic fuels are chemically similar to the energy-dense liquid fuels these modes of transport currently rely on, though it's equally possible to produce gases. They still only comprise a tiny share of fuels in these sectors – for instance, around 0.3% of global jet engine fuel was synthetic in 2024. This is expected to change dramatically in the coming years, potentially rising as high as 50% by 2050.

In the meantime, each synthetic fuel comes with trade-offs that affect their costs, scalability and the time to reach the market.

The alternatives

The two other main varieties of synthetic fuel are known as biochemical and thermochemical.

Biochemical fuels are derived either from processing waste fats and oils, or using fermentation or enzymes to transform things like crops and organic waste into alcohols.

In both cases, there's a final step that involves adding hydrogen, in a process called catalytic hydrogenation.

The supply chains are well established for this kind of production, but there's a lot of competition for the raw materials. They have to be grown on land or water that would otherwise be used for food. Even under optimistic assumptions, these won't satisfy global demand for sustainable fuels alone.

Thermochemical production uses high temperatures to convert wood residues, waste biomass or even plastics into syngas (a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen). This is then converted into liquid fuels through an industrial process such as Fischer-Tropsch, in which they are heated and run over a catalyst like cobalt.

E-fuels

E-fuels are the newest option. Many leaders in global energy expect them to play a central role in decarbonizing aviation and shipping – especially as biomass feedstocks reach their limits. Here's how it breaks down:

1. Carbon dioxide capture

Capturing and concentrating CO₂ requires about 1–3 megawatt hours (MWh) of energy per tonne, which is fairly significant. Using commercially supplied CO₂ is about one-third the cost of capturing it from the air, so hybrid approaches that use some commercial CO₂ will probably take off first.

2. Hydrogen production

Even the best methods for extracting hydrogen from water operate at about 70% efficiency. This means that 50–55 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity are needed to produce 1kg of hydrogen, which stores only 33 kWh of chemical energy.

3. Compression, storage and transport

Hydrogen must be compressed or liquefied, consuming additional energy (for example, around 10–13 kWh per kg of hydrogen for liquefaction). Hydrogen is also prone to leakage and can embrittle steel pipelines, making long-distance transport difficult.

4. Converting carbon dioxide to fuel

The captured and concentrated CO₂ is converted into fuel by reacting it with hydrogen – or it can first be reduced to carbon monoxide in a catalytic "fuel synthesis" process. In both cases, the resultant product can be an alcohol such as methanol, or a more complex hydrocarbon such as a mixture of paraffins or waxes. These steps require high temperatures and pressures, adding energy demand and capital cost.

In aviation, recent analysis predicts that most sustainable fuel will be biochemical or thermochemical until 2040, but after that most growth is likely to come from e-fuels. By 2050, these could make up over half of all synthetic fuels.

A look at the oldest Airports in the World

The next time you're stuck in a departure lounge, remember you might be sitting where aviation history was made, though the coffee prices probably weren't any better back then either!

The aviation industry has come a long way since those pioneering days, yet remarkably, several airports from aviation's infancy continue to welcome passengers today.

1. College Park Airport, opened in 1909

College Park Airport (KCGS), in the city of College Park, Maryland, US, is the world's oldest airport in operation, established in 1909 when Wilbur Wright arrived at the field to train two military officers in the US Army. The airport is situated in the city of College Park, Maryland, US, and currently serves as one of the gateway airports between Washington, DC and Prince George's County.

The airport, popularly known as the 'cradle of aviation', was acquired by the Maryland-National Capito and planning commission (M-NCPPC) in 1973. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.



No.2. Hamburg Airport (HAM) – Opened 1911

Hamburg Airport (Ham) opened in 1911 making it the world's second –oldest continuously operated airport. Its longevity reflects both German engineering excellence and the city's strategic importance as a Northern European commercial centre.

Between 2001 and 2009, Hamburg Airport (HAM) underwent a \$370 million renovation project



3. Bucharest Băneasa Aurel Vlaicu International Airport (BBU) – Opened 1912

George Valentin Bibescu established one of Romania's first flight schools in 1912, creating what would become Bucharest Băneasa Aurel Vlaicu International Airport (BBU). This facility represents Eastern Europe's oldest continuously operating airport and reflects the region's early adoption of aviation technology.

In the early 2000s, TAROM (RO) consolidated operations at the larger facility, but Băneasa remained Romania's second-busiest airport, particularly popular with low-cost carriers.



4. Bremen Airport (BRE) – Opened 1913

Bremen Airport (BRE) opened in 1913, representing one of Germany's first aviation facilities designed specifically for aircraft rather than airships, which were prevalent in German aviation at the time. This forward-thinking approach positioned Bremen as a pioneer in fixed-wing aviation infrastructure.



5. Rome Ciampino Airport (CIA) – Opened 1916

Rome Ciampino Airport (CIA) opened in 1916, serving as the Italian capital's primary aviation gateway for nearly half a century. The airport played a crucial role in establishing Italy's position in international aviation during the interwar period and beyond.



6. Amsterdam Schiphol Airport - Opened 1916 (AMS)

Amsterdam Schiphol Airport (AMS) began operations in September 1916 as a military airbase, reflecting aviation's military origins during World War I.

The transition to civilian operations occurred immediately after the war's end, positioning Schiphol as one of Europe's earliest commercial aviation facilities.



7. Paris-Le Bourget Airport (LBG) – Opened 1919

Paris-Le Bourget Airport (LBG) opened in 1919 as Paris's sole aviation facility, serving the French capital until Paris Orly Airport's opening in 1932.

Despite its eventual displacement as Paris's primary airport, Le Bourget earned its place in aviation history through several milestones.



8. Sydney Airport (SYD) – Opened 1920

Sydney Airport holds the distinction of being both the eighth-oldest continuously operating airport worldwide and the oldest in the Southern Hemisphere.

Its establishment in 1920 marked Australia's entry into the modern aviation age, positioning Sydney as a crucial link between Australia and the world.



9. Minneapolis/Saint Paul International Airport (MSP) – Opened 1920

The airport began its journey as Speedway Field in 1920, during an era when aviation was transitioning from military to civilian use following World War I. The facility's evolution mirrors the broader development of American aviation infrastructure.

10. Albany International Airport (ALB) – Opened 1920s

Albany International Airport (ALB) stands as a testament to American aviation's growth during the late 1920s. Originally established to serve New York's capital region, the airport began operations during the golden age of aviation when commercial flying was still considered a luxury for the wealthy and adventurous.



BOEING

777-300ER



The Quietly End Of An Era Of Its Production

Wanyana Maureen - Canada



Since entering commercial service in 2004, the Boeing 777-300ER has played a transformative role in global aviation. Its long range and high capacity enabled airlines to operate some of the world's longest and most prestigious routes with greater efficiency.

Boeing ultimately produced 837 of the type, making it the most successful variant of the 777 family. Yet when the final 777-300ER was quietly delivered in late 2024, it marked the end of an era without the usual fanfare typically reserved for a final aircraft rollout.

In this article, we will take a closer look at some of the reasons why Boeing ended production of the 777-300ER. We will also consider the legacy that the aircraft continues to have on the commercial aviation industry and the future of the 777 series.

In December 2024, Boeing delivered what is widely regarded as the final 777-300ER to Ethiopian Airlines. Since then, the US manufacturer has had no remaining 777-300ERs on its order book, aside from a lone order for Pakistan International Airlines, which appears unlikely to be fulfilled. This effectively marks the quiet conclusion of the 777-300ER program.

The final aircraft to be delivered, registered as ET-BGG, is one of five Boeing 777-300ERs that make up Ethiopian Airlines' fleet. Each of the carrier's 777-300ERs is able to accommodate up to a maximum of 399 passengers in a two-class configuration - 34 in business class and 365 in economy class.

About The Boeing 777-300ER

The Boeing 777-300ER was officially introduced as a response to growing demand for a high-capacity, long-range twin-engine aircraft capable of replacing older four-engine jets such as the Boeing 747-400 and Airbus A340.

Building on the success of the original 777-200 and 777-300 variants, Boeing launched the 777-300ER program in 2000, with the aim of creating an aircraft that combined the passenger capacity of the 777-300 with significantly improved range and performance.

At the heart of the Boeing 777-300ER's design was the powerful General Electric GE90-115B engine, which was at the time the most powerful commercial aircraft engine ever built. This, combined with structural enhancements such as a strengthened landing gear, raked wingtips, and a higher maximum takeoff weight, enabled the aircraft to fly up to 8,500 miles (13,650 km) with a full passenger payload, making it ideal for long-haul routes.

The first flight of the Boeing 777-300ER took place on February 24, 2003, and after a comprehensive flight testing and certification program, the aircraft was certified by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in early 2004.

The aircraft's launch customer, Air France, took delivery of the first 777-300ER in April 2004 and placed it into service shortly after on a flight from the SkyTeam carrier's primary hub at Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG) to New York John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK).

The 777-300ER's large business and first class cabins made it the perfect aircraft to deploy on such premium transatlantic routes.

Airlines Loved The Boeing 777-300ER

From the outset, the Boeing 777-300ER proved to be a game-changer in long-haul aviation. Airlines from around the world appreciated the aircraft's ability to carry over 360 passengers in a typical three-class configuration than the four-engine aircraft it was designed to replace.

The aircraft also benefited from ETOPS (Extended-range Twin-engine Operational Performance Standards) certification, allowing it to fly long distances over oceans and remote areas, opening new non-stop routes and improving scheduling flexibility.

Fuel efficiency was another major factor contributing to the popularity of the Boeing 777-300ER. The aircraft was powered by the powerful yet efficient General Electric GE90-115B engines, which delivered significant fuel savings compared to older widebody aircraft.

Its twin-engine design meant lower fuel burn and reduced maintenance costs compared to four-engine aircraft, making it more economical to operate on long-haul routes. Passenger comfort was also a significant selling point, with the Boeing 777-300ER's wide fuselage allowing airlines to offer more spacious and comfortable cabins, including wider seats and aisles, and later, private suites for passengers in first and business class. Advanced cabin systems and quieter engines enhanced the overall experience for passengers.

The world's largest operators of the Boeing 777-300ER are outlined in the table below:

Ranking	Airline	Boeing 777-300ER
1	Emirates	119
2	Qatar Airways	57
3	Air France	43
4	Cathay Pacific	35
5	Saudia	35
6	EVA Air	34
7	Turkish Airlines	33
8	Air China	28
9	Korean Air	25
10	Singapore Airlines	22



Clean Aviation's Journey to Climate

TODAY, THE AVIATION INDUSTRY GENERATES

87.7M JOBS



2.8% OF
GLOBAL CO₂



BY 2050:
DEMAND FOR FLIGHTS X 3



IF NO ACTION IS TAKEN:
EMISSIONS X 2



€1.7B PLEDGED THROUGH
HORIZON EUROPE



€2.4B VIA EUROPE'S
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INVESTMENT

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AEROPLANES BETWEEN 2035-2050

= €5 TRILLION IN ECONOMIC VALUE



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Net Neutrality by 2050

TARGETS

- 30-50 %** IMPROVED ENERGY EFFICIENCY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY
- 100 %** NET GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION REDUCTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, H2, SAF & OPERATIONAL MEASURES

SOLUTIONS

KEY IMPACTFUL TECHNOLOGIES FOR FLIGHTS OF LESS THAN 4000 KM

- 1. (HYBRID) ELECTRIC REGIONAL AIRCRAFT**
- 2. ULTRA EFFICIENT SHORT/MEDIUM RANGE AIRCRAFT**
- 3. HYDROGEN-POWERED AIRCRAFT**

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Clean Aviation in partnership with the European Union is organizing the The Clean Aviation Annual Forum 2026, which is scheduled for 17 and 18 March next year, at The Egmont Palace, Brussels. The two day event will offer numerous discussions on the future of innovation aviation.

Clean Aviation aims to develop, integrate and demonstrate disruptive technological innovations into new aircraft concepts by 2030. This will decrease aircraft greenhouse gas emissions by no less than 30%, compared to 2020 state-of-the-art technology, and pave the way towards climate-neutral aviation by 2050, in line with the European Green Deal's vision.

The European Union within the Horizon Europe Research & Innovation Programme collaborates with the European aeronautics sector to reach these climate ambitions.

Liebherr-Aerospace is one of the many partners in Clean Aviation and contributes its expertise and know-how to this joint undertaking.

Investing in the future of flight
To be ready for the aircraft that will enter service in the future, Liebherr-Aerospace consistently invests above industry-average ratios into the R&D activities in its fields of expertise: landing gears, flight controls, actuation, gears, gearboxes, and air management systems.

Liebherr works on such topics as next generations of electric actuators, electric wing, electric environmental control system, auxiliary power generation systems, hydraulic power supply, and thermal and power management on-board the aircraft.

The Most Revolutionary Aircraft Engines

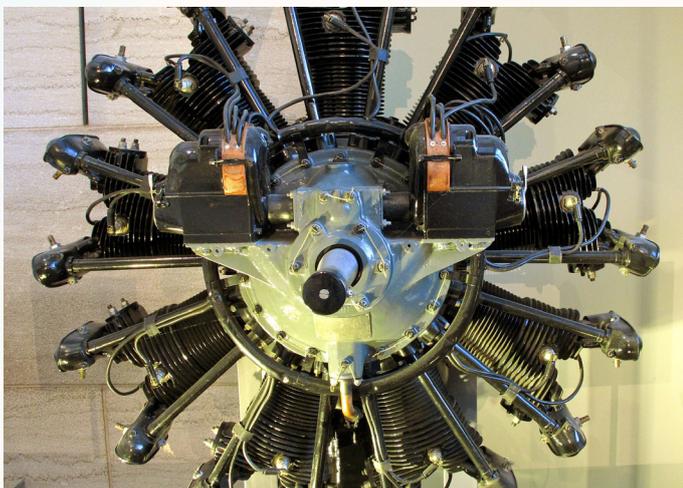
Ssembajjwe Robert

When ranking the most revolutionary engines, it's worth keeping in mind that an engine can be a technology demonstrator and not that successful in itself. Here are some things to know about the most revolutionary commercial engines, including technology demonstrators and mass-produced models.

Wright J-4/J-5 "Whirlwind" Piston Engine, First introduced in the 1920s

The Wright Whirlwind family of air-cooled radial aircraft engines produced the first truly reliable commercial power plants for aircraft. The series was built by Wright Aeronautical, which became a division of Curtiss-Wright. The engines, and especially the J-5, were some of the first aircraft piston engines that were considered reliable enough to make commercial passenger flying practical.

Previously, earlier airliners had to contend with aircraft that frequently experienced engine failures. The Whirlwind series drastically reduced operational risks for airliners. They were air-cooled, didn't overheat, and boasted higher reliability. Ford Motor Company's foray into building airplanes before exiting and returning to focus on cars.



Wright J-4/J-5 "Whirlwind" Piston Engine

Pratt & Whitney Wasp Series, First introduced in the 1920s

Following the Wright Whirlwind series, one of the most impactful engines was the Pratt & Whitney Wasp series of air-cooled, radial piston engines. The series was first developed in the 1920s, and developments ran into the 1940s. It was one of the first products that catapulted Pratt & Whitney to its status as a major aero engine developer. The company had been founded in 1925 by Frederick B. Rentschler, who had been president of Wright Aeronautical. Rentschler brought some of Wright's best engineers and developed the R-1340 Wasp as the first design. Later,



Pratt & Whitney Wasp Series



Rolls-Royce RB.53 Dart

the P&W R-1830 variant would become one of the most produced radial engines in history. It became the backbone of commercial aviation in the 1930s and 1940s. The two-row radial design improved power, but did not add excessive complexity or weight.

Rolls-Royce RB.53 Dart, First introduced in 1948

The Rolls-Royce RB.53 Dart first ran in 1946, and it powered the Vickers Viscount on its maiden flight in 1948. That flight flew from Northolt to Paris-Le Bourget Airport carrying 14 paying passengers and marked the first regularly scheduled airline flight by a turbine-powered aircraft.

The Viscount was the first turboprop-powered aircraft to enter airline service.

The engine proved that turboprops could be efficient and quiet compared with aero piston engines. They offered smoother vibration levels, lower cabin noise, and faster cruise speeds.

Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6, First introduced in 1964

Pratt & Whitney Canada boasts, "The PT6A engine family is the world's most popular engine in its class and is one of Pratt & Whitney's greatest success stories." It adds, "Experience gained from the PT6A has helped spawn many of the engine families that have made Pratt & Whitney a world leader in the gas turbine engine market."

Arguably, this is no exaggeration. The Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6 was first designed in 1958, flew in 1961 and entered service in 1964. Updated variants of the PT6 remain in production. Not only has the family powered smaller aircraft like the de Havilland Canada Dash 7, de Havilland Twin Otter, King Air, and Pilatus PC-12, but it has also powered helicopters, land vehicles, hovercraft, and boats.

Pratt & Whitney JT9D, First introduced in 1970

The Pratt & Whitney JT9D is listed here, even though the General Electric TF39 was the first high-bypass jet engine. General Electric may have been able to develop its TF39 first, but its application was the military Lockheed C-5 Galaxy. Meanwhile, P&W's JT9D made the Boeing 747 Jumbo possible.

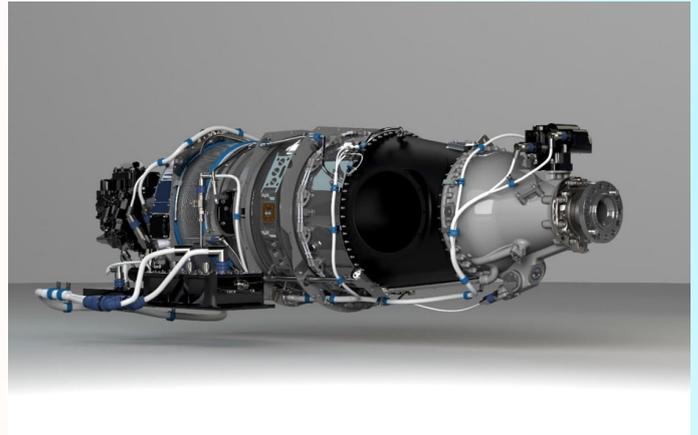
The Pratt & Whitney JT9D was the first high-bypass turbofan able to produce the enormous amount of thrust needed for the world's massive Jumbos. It achieved a bypass ratio of around 5:1 and offered significant reductions in fuel burn and noise compared with older low-bypass engines. It also powered the DC-10 and A300, and was a keystone to the global air-travel boom of the 1970s.

General Electric GE90, Entered service in 1995

The General Electric GE90 is notable for shattering several records. It was the first engine to produce over 100,000 lbf (the GE90-115B is certified at 127,900 lbf). It came

with a record 123-128 inch fan diameter and introduced the highest bypass ratio of around 9:1. Other innovations included composite fan blades on a large scale, very high turbine temperatures, swept wide-chord blades, and more.

The GE90 was able to redefine ultra-long-range networks with the Boeing 777-200LR and Boeing 777-300ER, as well as the Boeing 777F. The GE90 remains in production for the remaining Boeing 777Fs being produced, while it also directly aided the development of the GENx, most famously powering the Boeing 787 Dreamliner and the upcoming



Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6



Pratt & Whitney JT9D



General Electric GE90

SKY-HIGH RUNWAYS:

A Look at Earth's Highest Airports

Airports built above 3,500 metres are among the toughest environments in which aircraft operate. The thin air reduces lift, engines lose efficiency, and even the human body struggles to adapt. Runways must be longer to allow sufficient take-off speed, while terminals and

support systems need oxygen and temperature regulation. These factors make high-altitude aviation a remarkable feat of engineering and endurance. The following seven airports, all sitting well above 3,700 metres, are the highest operational airports on Earth.

Daocheng Yading Airport

Daocheng Yading Airport in Sichuan, China, holds the record as the world's highest civilian airport at 4,411 metres (14,472 feet). Opened in 2013, it connects the remote Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture to major cities such as Chengdu. The airport features an extended 4,200-metre runway, oxygen-enriched facilities, and specially trained crews to handle the demanding conditions. Daocheng symbolises China's ambition to develop its far western regions despite altitude and climate challenges.



Qamdo Bamda Airport

Located in the Tibet Autonomous Region at about 4,334 metres, Qamdo Bamda once held the record for the world's highest airport. Its claim to fame now lies in its colossal runway, over 5,500 metres long, one of the longest on the planet. The reason is simple: aircraft require far more speed to generate lift in the rarefied atmosphere. For pilots, Bamda's approach is a test of precision and timing; for engineers, it's an enduring model of adaptation to thin-air flight.



Kangding Airport

Kangding, also in Sichuan, lies at approximately 4,280 metres. Built to connect western China's mountainous Garzê region with the rest of the country, it is a gateway to the Tibetan plateau. The airport's location is challenging, surrounded by snow-covered peaks and prone to sudden weather changes. Despite these hurdles, Kangding plays a crucial role in regional connectivity and economic development in one of China's most isolated areas.



El Alto International

El Alto International Airport, serving La Paz, Bolivia, is the highest international airport in the world at about 4,061 metres (13,325 feet). Unlike most of its Asian counterparts, El Alto has decades of continuous civilian operation. The combination of thin air and steep Andean terrain makes it one of the most demanding airports for pilots. Its elevation also means visitors often feel the effects of altitude immediately upon landing, a reminder that even the simplest flight here tests human limits.



Ngari Gunsa, or Ali Kunsha Airport,

This sits at 4,274 metres in far-western Tibet, near India's northern border. It is both a civilian and a military facility, serving the remote town of Shiquanhe. Its importance extends beyond passenger travel, the airfield supports logistics, defence readiness, and medical evacuation in one of the harshest inhabited regions on Earth. Its year-round operation demonstrates the reliability of high-altitude aviation in extreme conditions.



Shigatse Peace Airport

At around 3,782 metres, Shigatse Peace Airport in Tibet functions as both a regional hub and a dual-use facility. It connects Lhasa and other Tibetan cities, providing critical air access across a landscape where road travel is slow and weather dependent. Its elevation and location make it strategically significant, linking Tibet's second-largest city with the rest of the plateau and beyond.

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HOW TO FLY A CHARTED VISUAL FLIGHT PROCEDURE (CVFP)

Nyawade Wendy Cella

You can find charted visual approaches at towered airports around the country. They're established for environmental considerations, noise abatement procedures, and for the overall safety and efficiency of air traffic operations.

Why Do Charted Visual Flight Procedures (CVFPs) Exist? While they're primarily designed for jet aircraft, you'll find piston aircraft flying CVFPs too.

Instead of using NAVAIDs like a localizer or VOR, each visual chart depicts local landmarks, courses, and recommended altitudes for an approach to a specific runway.

Visual Approaches vs. CVFPs

According to the FAA, CVFPs differ from normal visual approaches because they require a pilot to have a charted landmark, rather than the airport, in sight (AIM 5-4-22/23). A CVFP might also have higher weather minimums than a visual approach. Air Traffic Control will not issue clearances for CVFPs when the weather is less than the published minimum, they'll put you on an approach instead. These weather minimums are displayed on the CVFP chart, similar to an instrument approach.

Clearance and Weather Minimums

To fly a CVFP, pilots must have a charted visual landmark or the preceding aircraft in sight. According to the FAA's Instrument Procedures Handbook, "ATC will only clear pilots for a CVFP if the reported ceiling at the airport of intended landing is at least 500 feet above the MVA/MIA, and the

visibility is 3 SM or more, unless higher minimums are published for the particular CVFP."

If you accept a CVFP clearance following traffic, you become responsible for maintaining safe altitude, separation from preceding traffic, and wake turbulence separation. Just like other visual approaches, you must advise ATC that you're unable to continue a charted visual approach if you lose contact with the preceding aircraft or the required landmarks along the approach.

Flying A Missed Approach

CVFPs are not instrument approaches and, like regular visual approaches, do not have a published missed approach procedure. Your missed approach should be planned to pattern altitude, and further instructions will come from the tower. When you review the approach, brief your planned altitude and direction in the event of a missed approach.

Example: Roaring Fork Visual Runway 15, Aspen (KASE)
As you can see, the Roaring Fork Visual to Runway 15 in Aspen has several inbound directions. The landmarks you'll use are mountains, the Red Table VOR, rivers, and valleys surrounding KASE. And, as stated in the notes, the procedure is not authorized at night.

Example: River Visual Runway 19, Washington DC (KDCA)
The River Visual to Runway 19 in at Washington's Reagan Airport is one of the best-known CVFPs out there. The procedure is relatively straightforward: follow the river inbound. The risk lies in penetrating one of the prohibited areas found just on the eastern edge of the Potomac, surrounding the White House, Capitol, and Washington Mall.



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FIND OUT MORE

OneDXB Leads Charge For Sustainable Aviation At Dubai

Nyawade Wendy Cella

Sustainability is in the spotlight at this year's Dubai Airshow where Dubai Airports is unveiling its OneDXB Sustainability Showcase, which it says shows how one of the world's busiest aviation hubs is steering the industry toward a greener future. From cutting-edge energy initiatives and electrified ground operations to carbon-reduction strategies, the showcase underlines how efficiency and environmental responsibility go hand in hand.

The OneDXB Sustainability Alliance, which launched in September 2024, brings together seven founding partners—Dubai Airports, Emirates, flydubai, dnata, Dubai Duty Free, Emirates Flight Catering and Dubai Air Navigation Services. The goal is simple yet ambitious: to accelerate collective decarbonization efforts and set new sustainability benchmarks for the region and wider global aviation ecosystem.

"At DXB, we work with hundreds of partners, but the idea behind OneDXB is to create a focused alliance that collaborates on how we decarbonize in the short term and how we plan for future sustainable aviation strategies," says Sven Deckers, Dubai Airports' head of sustainability.

With Dubai Airports in the midst of master-planning the next-generation mega-hub at Al Maktoum International (DWC), sustainability is being built into the project from the ground up. "As much as we need to look at how we decarbonize today, we must also think across the whole aviation ecosystem—10, 20 or 30 years ahead," Deckers adds. Integrated Sustainability in Action OneDXB's Sustainable Turnaround Showcase offers visitors a



unique, integrated experience that brings together around 35 partners and 45 pieces of equipment in a compact, 20-min. walkthrough. "Rather than visiting 30 or 40 separate stands, delegates can see the full picture of sustainable aviation, from the airport operator to airlines, ground handlers, and service providers, all in one place," Deckers says.

The showcase includes a flydubai aircraft positioned on site to demonstrate a fully electrified turnaround, illustrating how ground operations can dramatically cut emissions. From electric fire trucks and autonomous vehicles to solar-powered systems and dry-washing technology, the display reflects real-world progress as well as what's coming next.

"It's not about showing off," Deckers says. "It's about showing what can be done—and inviting others to join the conversation. So, we encourage visitors to come to our stand and see for themselves. This is the start of something big."

Among the technologies being showcased are multiple alternative-fuel solutions, including biofuels and hydrogen. Dubai Airports is already deploying biofuel in its operations, while also exploring hydrogen-powered ground transport—including a fully licensed hydrogen bus here at the show.

"There's no single solution to aviation's net-zero goal," Deckers says. "It's about a combination of many actions—electrification, biofuels, hydrogen and new operational efficiencies—each one moving the needle further."

The UAE's potential to produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) is another focus area. A truck on display demonstrates how used cooking oil collected across the UAE can be converted into SAF and biofuel.

For Dubai Airports, the road to net zero involves a three-pillar approach: decarbonizing DXB through proven technologies such as solar panels, LED lighting and HVAC optimization; trialing future solutions at DWC, which serves as an innovation testbed; and embedding sustainability into the design and operations of the upcoming DWC mega-hub. "Unlike other major airports, the Dubai Airports setup gives us the unique opportunity to test in a live environment at DWC and design the airport of the future from scratch," Deckers says. "The future will be more sustainable, and we're working today to define what that looks like."

Credit: Chloe Greenbank

NO-FLAP LANDINGS:

Guidelines for Flight Crews

A number of malfunctions can cause flaps to fail in the up position or close to the up position. These include an asymmetric flap condition that causes the asymmetry sensors to stop flap movement. Other possible causes include hydraulic failure, electrical failure, or mechanical failure such as a broken jackscrew.

A no-flap landing is usually considered an emergency due to significantly higher landing speeds, which require longer runways. The high landing speeds can also result in brake overheating or fire.

Guidance in SOPs and emergency procedures checklists usually recommend a long, straight-in approach. This reduces workload and minimizes maneuvering the airplane in a configuration with a higher stall speed. For these same reasons, it's also a good idea to ask Air Traffic Control (ATC) for a straight-out missed approach in the event of a go-around.

QRH guidance for flap failure will normally include landing performance tables that provide the proper approach speeds and expected landing distances. Crews should make sure to compare the performance data with runway available, and consider alternate landing sites if necessary.

The QRH may leave it up to the crew whether to declare



an emergency. Doing so can provide extra margins of safety, such as rescue and firefighting services (RFFS) standing by in the event of a brake fire.

When flying an approach with inoperative flaps, crews will not make the usual configuration callouts during the approach, i.e., "flaps one," "flaps two," etc. As a result, they may not have the usual cues for lowering the landing gear. Good crew resource management (CRM) can become a defence against this hazard.

For example, during the approach briefing, the pilot flying (PF) might say, "Because we are not on our usual landing profile, let's take care not to forget to lower the landing gear." Of course, the landing gear aural warning would alert the crew below a certain altitude, but this would require a go-around in an already stressful situation.

Another hazard with a non-standard approach profile is forgetting to slow to approach

speed (V_{app}). Crews in simulator training have been known to fly the entire no-flap approach at 210 knots or higher.

This negates landing performance calculations, increases the risk of a runway overrun and/or brake fire, and, at best, results in a go-around. A good approach briefing as described above can serve as a safety net against this hazard.

With some aircraft, a no-flap approach flown on a standard three-degree glide path may trigger a "sink rate" alert from the Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System (EGPWS). Here again, a good approach briefing that notes this possibility can prevent the resulting startle factor during a critical phase of flight.

The QRH may require landing with autothrottle/autothrust (AT) off. Even if the QRH does not mandate this, turning off AT could be a good technique, to prevent large undesired

power reductions as the aircraft nears the ground. If the aircraft is equipped with autobrakes, crews should consider whether to use them, and if used, which setting to use. Autobrake systems have selectable deceleration rates. The QRH or other operator guidance may specify autobrake settings. Maximum manual braking may result in shorter landing distances than with autobrakes. Depending on landing distance available, the risk of brake overheating must be weighed against the greater risk of runway overrun.

At a higher landing speed, without the drag created by flaps, the aircraft will have a tendency to float in ground effect. Excessive flare could cause ballooning, which could turn a stable approach into a dangerous unstable approach. Most QRH guidance will direct pilots to "fly" the aircraft all the way into the touchdown with minimal flare.

After landing, crews should check brake temperatures and request RFFS assistance if necessary. If brake fire appears imminent, crews should consider preparing for an emergency evacuation. With high brake temperatures, crews should also consider keeping the aircraft away from the gate area until brakes have cooled. RFFS may have better access to the aircraft if it's on a taxiway or runway rather than at a gate with other aircraft and equipment close by.

Source: skybrary



A photograph showing a person in a dark blue uniform with reflective yellow stripes working on the engine of an aircraft. The engine cover is open, revealing various mechanical components. A yellow hydraulic jack is positioned under the engine. The background shows the fuselage of the aircraft and the interior of a hangar.

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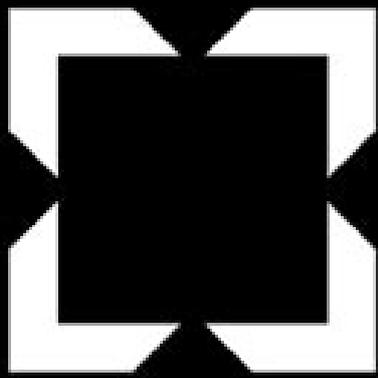
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Rostec

Unveils State-of-the-Art Air Defense Solutions at Dubai Airshow 2025



The new Pantsir system has been developed by High-Precision Weapons in response to current UAV threats. It is designed to protect industrial and administrative facilities and is capable of destroying all types of aerodynamic targets, including any unmanned aerial vehicles. The ammunition load in the launching ramp may comprise up to 48 miniature short-range guided surface-to-air missiles or 12 standard missiles.

"This year, the Pantsir-SMD-E system has already attracted a lot of attention among our foreign partners at the IDEX exhibition in Abu Dhabi. The threat of large-scale UAV attacks is now recognized worldwide, and the new modular Pantsir system provides a flexible solution as it can be deployed on building rooftops or at specially prepared sites.

The ammunition load can be increased to 48 miniature missiles, which makes it possible to effectively repel large-scale UAV attacks and provides reliable protection for various facilities, including industrial, social and transport infrastructure as well as other structures. We expect that this system will attract considerable interest at Dubai Airshow 2025," said Bekhan Ozdov, Industrial Director of the Weapons Cluster of Rostec State Corporation, member of the Bureau of the Union of Machine Engineers of Russia.

In addition, visitors are shown an airspace control system that detects and tracks flying targets, including UAVs and cruise missiles. The system's capabilities enable it to detect even low-altitude and low-speed targets.

The exhibition also features the Verba short-range man-portable air-defense system designed to destroy airplanes, helicopters, UAVs and cruise missiles. It remains effective even amid strong optical

jamming.

For greater mobility and convenience, a crew can use the Dzhigit launching unit, which can be deployed at a combat site in just three minutes. It is a fire-and-forget system that can launch two Verba or Igla surface-to-air missiles. The unit can be used as a fixed version or mounted on a vehicle; it can also be disassembled and carried manually.

Pantsir-SMD-E

The wide range of the Pantsir anti-aircraft missile and gun systems has recently been supplemented with one more product. Along with the Pantsir-S1M air defense missile and gun system (ADMGS) and the Pantsir-ME shipborne ADMGS, the manufacturer demonstrates a full-scale model of the latest Pantsir-SMD-E surface-to-air missile (SAM) system.

This new version of the Pantsir debuted at the Army-2024 International Military and Technical Forum.

The Pantsir-SMD-E is designed to protect industrial and administrative facilities from massive UAV attacks. The system is equipped with a fire control system. The latter includes a surveillance radar, a multifunctional radar system and an electro-optical system.

The Pantsir-SMD-E can detect and defeat aerial targets at medium and short distances, as well as make assessment for shooting efficiency in an automatic mode. Ammunition in racks of the launcher can be up to 48 surface-to-air missiles for close-in intercept or up to 12 standard surface-to-air missiles. In practice, the number of missiles in the launcher can vary depending on distribution between standard and mini missiles.

Dzhigit support launcher

Dzhigit support launcher is mobile unit, intended for firing from the ground or vehicle with two missiles of Igla-S and Verba in salvo or one after another. The MANPADS can be used on the principle of "fire and forget" ensuring convenient use of man-portable air defence systems by antiaircraft gunner. Dzhigit is characterized by high stealth and battlefield survivability.

The item can also stay on duty in stationary modes. Dzhigit can also be installed in vehicle body or disassembled into three parts for transportation by military unit personnel. Setting-up time for combat position is 3 min. Reload time is 2 min.

Through installation of night vision optical sight and other additional equipment, Dzhigit can operate at any time of the day as well as it can use external target designation and identify targets using "friend-or-foe" principle. High-



Precision Weapons JSC receives positive feedback on the Dzhigit support launcher from foreign customers from more than 10 countries that have already ordered the product through Rosoboronexport JSC.

Verba MANPADS

It is the latest Russian MANPADS with enhanced capabilities, with low thermal emission levels and reduced missile expenditure while engagement of various targets. Improved characteristics are based on the use of fundamentally new three-spectral, multi-element target seeker and new instrument unit assembly.

The signals received in three spectra provide significantly more information about the target, making Verba intelligent and selective weaponry. The automated control system allows detection of air targets, including group ones, determination of their flight parameters and even the target distribution among gunners.

The missile engine allows engagement of targets at the range of up to 6 km from the gunner. Engagement altitude varies from 10 meters to 3.5 km.

Airspace Control System (SKVP)

Airspace Control System (SKVP) developed by the Holding allows to detect and track various air objects, including UAVs and cruise missiles, as well as to determine their coordinates.

One of the system's features is an ability to detect targets flying at low altitude and low speed for flying objects – just 10 m/s. Weighing only 100 kg, it can be placed on any unprepared areas, including urban environment (on buildings, rooftops, cell towers). High level of passive interference suppression helps to ensure air objects detection in any weather conditions at any time of day and night.

X-UAV air-to-surface guided missile

It is designed to engage lightly armoured, single, small-sized, fixed (low-mobility) ground targets and objects day and night in simple or moderately complex weather conditions, as well as small-tonnage surface targets in the coastal zone.

X-UAV guided missile is used from long-endurance UAVs. The missile can be launched against ground targets at 4 km altitude, with flight range of 8 km (minimum missile flight range – 2 km). X-UAV has a 6 kg high-explosive fragmentation warhead.



Gatwiri Edna



The Hongdu L-15 (export designation JL-10, NATO reporting name "Falcon") was developed by China's state-owned Hongdu Aviation Industry Group (a subsidiary of AVIC) to address a critical gap in the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and export markets for a modern, supersonic-capable advanced jet trainer (AJT) and light combat aircraft.

Key motivations:

- Replace obsolete trainers: Phasing out the Czech-designed L-39 variants and early-model domestic JL-8s.
- Pilot pipeline for 4+/5th gen fighters: Specifically designed to transition pilots to aircraft like the J-10, J-16, and J-20 by simulating advanced flight characteristics, glass cockpit management, and tactical systems operation.
- Export competition: Positioned against established Western (BAE Hawk, M-346) and Russian (Yak-130) AJTs in the global market, particularly targeting Global South nations.

Technical Specifications & Design Highlights

a. Aerodynamics: Tandem-seat, twin-engine, high-wing configuration with leading-edge root extensions (LERX) and a fly-by-wire (FBW) control system. Emphasizes high maneuverability and a wide flight envelope.

b. Propulsion:

- Early versions used Ukrainian AI-222K-25F afterburning turbofans (Soviet heritage).
- Current production models now feature the indigenized WS-17 or similar Chinese afterburning turbofans, mitigating supply chain risks.
- Thrust-to-weight ratio >1 (in combat configuration), enabling supersonic flight (Mach 1.4).

b. Avionics & Systems:

- Glass cockpit with multi-function displays (MFDs), head-up display (HUD), and Hands-On-Throttle-And-Stick (HOTAS)

controls.

- Modular mission system capable of simulating air-to-air and air-to-ground radar, electronic warfare (EW) systems, and targeting pods.

c. Embedded Tactical Training System (ETTS) for simulated combat training.

- Armament (for LIFT variant): 7 hardpoints for a variety of munitions, including PL-5/PL-9 AAMs, precision-guided bombs, rocket pods, and a 23mm gun pod. Effectively functions as a light attack aircraft.

d. Operational Roles & Variants: L-15A: Basic Advanced Jet Trainer (AJT) variant (non-afterburning engines, subsonic).

- L-15B (JL-10 in PLAAF service): Lead-In Fighter Trainer (LIFT) variant with afterburning engines, supersonic speed, enhanced avionics, and full combat capability. This is the primary model now in service.
- Export versions: Marketed to Africa, Middle East, and Asia as a cost-effective supersonic trainer/light combat aircraft.

c. Strategic & Market Analysis

Strengths:

- Cost-effectiveness: Priced significantly lower than Western equivalents (estimated \$15-25 million vs. \$30+ million for M-346/Hawk).
- High performance: Supersonic capability and high agility are unusual in the trainer segment, offering superior transition to modern fighters.
- Political flexibility: Sold without the political restrictions often attached to Western/Russian arms, appealing to nations like Zambia (launch export customer) and Venezuela.
- Industrial diplomacy: Part of China's integrated package of military hardware, training, and potential technology transfer.

Weaknesses & Challenges:

- Logistics footprint: Twin-engine design increases maintenance complexity and operating costs compared to single-engine rivals.
- Market saturation: Entered a crowded market dominated by established, trusted Western designs with longer operational histories.
- Perception issues: Lingering doubts about long-term reliability, combat system integration maturity, and support

network compared to Western OEMs.

- Geopolitical alignment: Purchase can be seen as aligning with China's sphere of influence, which may deter some potential customers.

The L-15B is a technically capable and strategically significant aircraft that successfully modernized China's pilot training pipeline while creating a competitive export product. It represents China's shift from copying Soviet designs to producing innovative, mid-tier military aircraft tailored to specific market niches.

Future Trajectory:

- PLAAF Integration: Becoming the cornerstone of China's advanced training syllabus, directly feeding 5th-generation fighter programs.
- Export Potential: Likely to gain further sales in nations already operating Chinese military hardware (e.g., Pakistan, Bangladesh, African partners) seeking an affordable supersonic trainer/light attack platform.
- Technology Pathway: Serves as a testbed for avionics and subsystem development, potentially leading to more sophisticated light combat aircraft or unmanned loyal wingman derivatives.

In essence, the L-15 is more than a trainer—it is a symbol of China's growing indigenous aerospace capability and its strategy to capture mid-tier global defense markets through a combination of performance, price, and political alignment.

Performance vs. Key Competitors

Feature	Hongdu L-15B	Aermacchi M-346	Yak-130	BAE Hawk 128
Max Speed	Mach 1.4	Mach 0.95	Mach 0.95	Mach 0.84
Engines	2 × WS-17 (afterburning)	2 × Honeywell F124 (non-afterburning)	2 × AI-222-25	1 × Adour 951 (non-afterburning)
Combat Role	Yes (LIFT)	Limited (trainer-focused)	Yes (LIFT)	Limited
Primary Market	China, Africa, S. America	Europe, Middle East, Israel	CIS, Asia, Africa	UK, India, Saudi Arabia
Key Advantage	Supersonic, cost	Avionics, Western logistics	Proven, rugged	Simplicity, global support





UNVEILING THE RUSSIAN ANSAT HELICOPTER

*Rostec's Import-Substituted Light Multirole Helicopter
Completes Maiden Flight, Targets Medical and Utility Markets
with Enhanced Range and Domestic Systems*



In a significant milestone for Russia's aviation industry, the fully import-substituted Ansat-M light multirole helicopter has successfully commenced preliminary flight testing. The aircraft, powered by new Russian-made VK-650V engines and stripped of all foreign-supplied components, represents a strategic leap toward technological sovereignty in rotorcraft manufacturing. Developed by Russian Helicopters (part of Rostec State Corporation), the Ansat-M completed its maiden flight on September 2, 2025.

The program's core achievement is the comprehensive replacement of previously imported systems—including the flight control system, autopilot, avionics suite, and electrical power generation systems—with domestically engineered alternatives. Aircraft Enhancements: Beyond Import Substitution While the primary goal was technological independence, the redesign yielded notable performance and structural improvements.



- **Powerplant:** The new VK-650V engines, developed by the United Engine Corporation (also part of Rostec), provide the helicopter with a fully Russian propulsion system, securing the supply chain against geopolitical constraints.
- **Increased Range:** The Ansat-M boasts a significantly extended operational range of 660 km. With an optional auxiliary fuel tank, this increases to 800 km, dramatically enhancing its utility for operators across Russia's vast territories.
- **Weight Optimization:** Modifications to the fuselage, including an increased use of composite materials, have improved the aircraft's weight profile, contributing to its enhanced performance.
- **Advanced Avionics & Stability:** The helicopter is now equipped with a modern, domestically produced glass cockpit and an advanced autopilot. Engineers have also improved the aircraft's directional stability, crucial for precise operations in challenging conditions.

"The import-substituted Ansat is not just a copy of the original; it is an upgraded platform," stated Nikolay Kolesov, CEO of Russian Helicopters. "Its advantages, including instrument flight capability, modern systems, and extended range, are directly relevant for the diverse and demanding operational environments our customers face across Russia. We are now focused on finalizing certification testing."

Spotlight:

The Medical "Ambulance" Configuration

Demonstrating its versatility, the Ansat-M is being prominently showcased in a specialized air ambulance configuration. The medical module is engineered for efficiency and safety, allowing a single medical professional to manage patient care without disconnecting life support systems during transport. The module is equipped with a defibrillator and other essential equipment to perform resuscitation procedures in flight.

A critical optional feature is a certified isolation transport box, designed for the safe evacuation of patients with highly infectious diseases—such as COVID-19 or Ebola—or for transporting casualties from radiologically or chemically contaminated areas to specialized medical facilities.

Proven Platform with Newfound Independence

The Ansat series is already a proven workhorse, with over 140 units in service globally, accumulating more than 150,000 flight hours. The helicopter is recognized for its spacious cabin, high maneuverability, and ease of maintenance. It maintains robust performance, certified to operate in temperatures up to +50°C and at altitudes up to 3,500 meters.

The successful debut of the Ansat-M marks a pivotal moment for Russia's aerospace sector. It transitions a successful commercial platform into a strategically autonomous asset, reducing dependency on foreign technology while simultaneously expanding its operational capabilities for key roles in medical services, utility transport, and regional connectivity.



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UPGRADING ENTEBBE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOR A BETTER PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

Entebbe International Airport's modified terminal building was opened to the public in January 2024 and all facilities are operational and running smoothly.

The imminent commission of a new 20,000 sqm terminal connecting to the current terminal will enhance terminal capacity to at least 3.5 million passengers per year.

The existing and ongoing upgrades being implemented are part of a 20-year National Aviation Master Plan aimed at catering to the growing traffic at Entebbe Airport and enhancing the passenger experience.

